

Anna speaks

AT THE RAJYA SABHA 1962-66

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Edited by
S. RAMACHANDRAN



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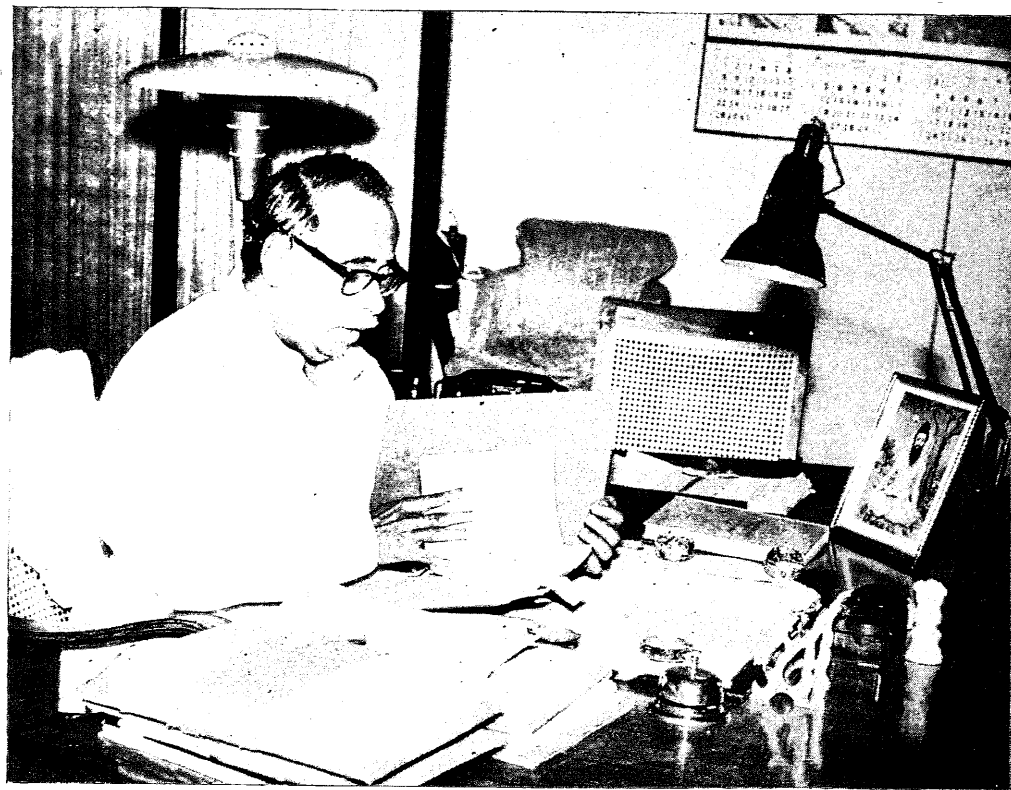
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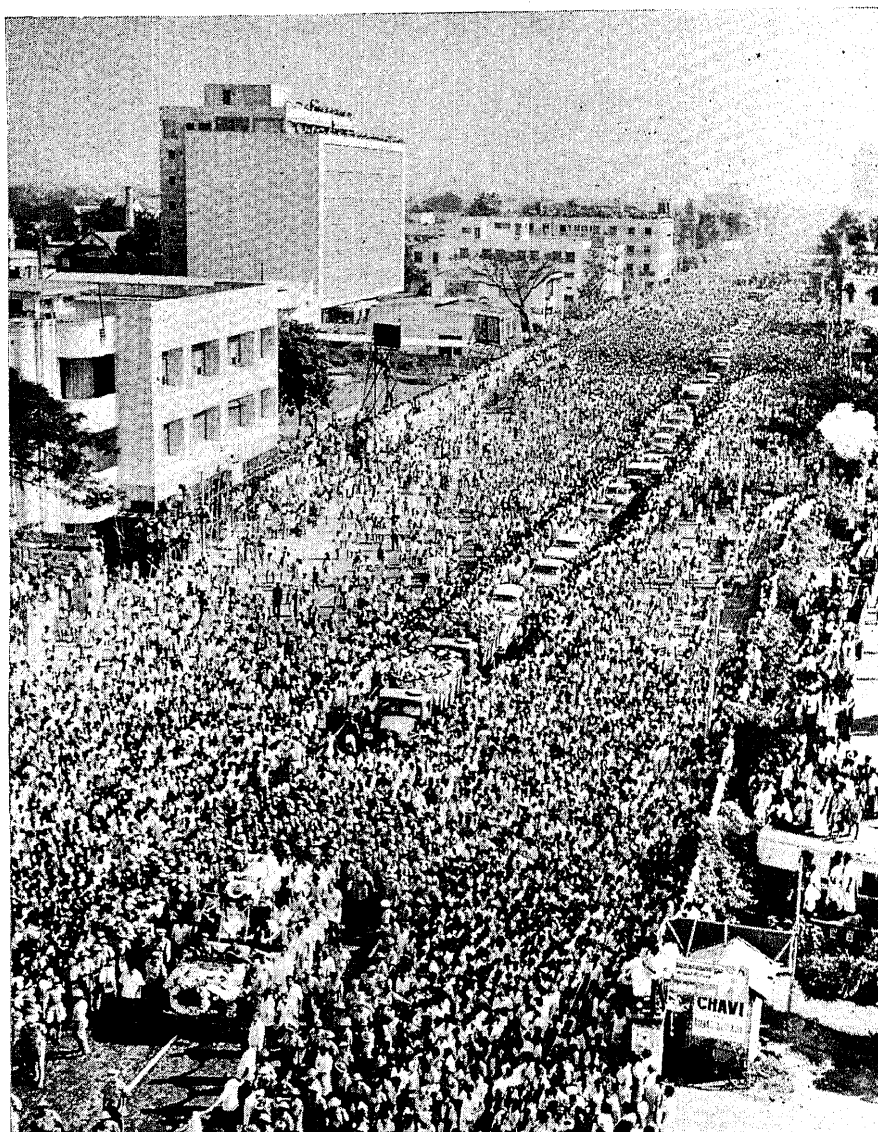
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The funeral procession

Anna

It was on 3rd February 1969 that the entire population of Tamilnadu literally crowded into Madras city. It was on that day that the news of the demise of our revered leader 'Anna' reached the nook and corner of Tamilnadu, and came as a shock to each and every individual. From that moment, people began pouring into Madras city to have the last glimpse of their dear departed leader. They had come from the distant towns and villages, perched on the roofs of over-crowded trains and rickety buses and on foot. In one of the worst tragedies of the time, at least 28 persons were crushed to death and over 70 persons were injured due to their journey on the roof-top, when the Madras-bound Janata Express was passing across the Coleroon Bridge between the Coleroon and Chidambaram stations. No vehicles were permitted to go anywhere except to Madras city on that particular day, whether they were trains, buses, lorries, motor-cars, taxis, tractors or any other form of conveyance. The grief struck almost every household not only in Tamilnadu, but also wherever the Tamils lived in other States and other countries. Such was the universal sorrow felt by the Tamils all over the world on the loss of 'Anna', who loved them above all else.

Framed by the lofty columns of Rajaji Hall, he was laid in state amidst the weeping and wailing of millions. In their single-minded determination to pay homage they were not deterred by a wait under the blistering sun, or by hunger and foot-sore weariness. The sobbing people outside Rajaji Hall were such that even the entire police force mustered to control them could not do so, and had reluctantly to burst tear-gas shells several times.

As the funeral procession went along Mount Road, now known as Anna Salai, a huge multitude of people witnessed it from the terraces, balconies, and precariously perched themselves on the sun-shades of the long line of buildings on both sides. The military van carrying the body looked like a floating ferry on the surging waves of the masses. So also, when it reached the Marina, it was once again afloat on the vast expanse of a sea of heads. Many

were atop trees and most others filled the entire Marina Beach and a few other resourceful people climbed aboard the grounded ship *Stamatis*. The size of the crowd was beyond estimate. Some estimated it to have been over five million. The Guinness Book of Records has it that "the funeral of 'Anna' was attended by the largest number of people in the world." This century has witnessed only three funerals comparable to anything like that of Anna's.

The first one was that of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak at Bombay in 1920, the second was that of Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi in 1948 and the third was that of Jawaharlal Nehru in Delhi in 1964. The city of Madras or South India has never in its history witnessed a funeral as poignant as Anna's.

Another striking feature of the entire funeral procession was the predominance of ordinary people like sweepers, scavengers, slum-dwellers and hut-dwellers. In fact when they tried again and again to break through the cordons to see the motorcade carrying the body of Anna and were prevented by the police — lest they should be run over by the passing vehicles — one woman braved the police and cried, "Anna is gone and I don't mind being run over." The woman kept running for some time but she could not stay in the race for long. Such was the deep sentimental attachment the downtrodden had for their dear Anna who lived to make their life a little more worth living. Even today the abiding emotion the people of Tamilnadu have for him can be seen from the neverending stream of visitors to the 'Anna Memorial Square', artistically conceived and magnificently erected on the silvery sands of Marina Beach in Madras city.

There is a saying in Tamil that one's worth is known only after one's death. If that is the index of one's worthiness, Anna is the worthiest of all. In fact, an English daily while reporting the death of Anna carried the caption "A stormy political career ends." Really Anna was a wild storm that swept before it the distress of the depressed. The common man felt that someone near and dear to him had disappeared from the scene and it is doubtful whether at any time in its history, Madras has witnessed such a stirring and soulful scene.

I first met Anna in 1956 when I was Secretary of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Students' Association at Annamalai University, near Chidambaram. The temple at Chidambaram is not merely a monument to the glory of Dravidian architecture,

in legend and history ; it is also symbolic of the finest hour of the Dravidian people. It was here according to legend that the story of the heights to which a man could rise by perseverance, devotion and dedication was written. It was here, even in a hierarchical caste-ridden society, that the lowest in the land, Nandanar, was supposed to have met and mingled with Nataraja, the God himself. With such traditions, it was therefore not surprising that my *alma mater*, the Annamalai University, became the intellectual fountain-head of progressive political parties including the DMK Party. Needless to say, Anna made a lasting impression on the politically conscious elite at the University of whom some became subsequently outstanding leaders of the DMK Party.

I consider it to have been my good fortune to have met Anna so early in my life and to have come under his magnetic influence. After graduating in Engineering, I worked for a time in the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, but throughout the period I remained a faithful soldier of the party under Anna's leadership. On occasions, when in my impatience I longed to resign from Government service and take up full time party work, Anna in his inimitable way would counsel patience. He might have probably felt that the DMK Party, when it came to power would require technocrats schooled in the skills and strategies of administration and his party men should by sufficient training equip themselves for this purpose. Anna's generosity enabled me to contest the elections to the then Madras Legislative Assembly in the 1967 General Elections. After being elected to the Legislature, I was nominated as the Chairman of the Estimates Committee in 1967, an honour rarely conferred on a Member of the Assembly at the age of 30. My association with Anna during the two years he was the Chief Minister became closer. February 3, 1969 was a day of unbearable sorrow for me. I suffered an irreparable personal loss.

Conjeevaram Natarajan Annadurai was born on the 15th day of September 1909 at the handloom town of Kanchipuram. The only son of middle-class parents, he spent an uneventful childhood. He caused his parents a great deal of anxiety by failing more than once before passing his school final examination. He had secured a Backward Scholarship at Pachaiyappa's College, Madras. He exhibited the spirit of a true Anna by withdrawing from the B.A. (Hons.) Degree Examination of the Madras University at the end of the fifth year after taking two papers, the reason being that his friend and colleague who was dear to him fell sick and

could not take the examination and he genuinely felt that his action would give comfort and solace to his friend. Taking his Honours examination in the year 1935, Anna stood first in the University. He won innumerable trophies in debates and oratorical contests and was elected Secretary to the College Union and Chairman of the Economics Association.

Even as a student leader he was keenly sensitive to the political and social injustice around him. At college, he was attracted by the programme and policies of the Justice Party, a party that stood for justice for the large majority of non-Brahmins and for their liberation from Brahmin domination in the services and elsewhere. After a short spell as a teacher in a middle-school at Peddunaickenpet, he became Sub-Editor of *Justice*, the English daily of the Justice Party. Periyar Thiru E. V. Ramaswamy, the great rationalist reformer and the founder of the Self-Respect Movement, was the first to recognise the potentiality of this talented young sub-editor. Anna was also attracted towards Periyar's idealistic zeal in eradicating the social iniquities and inequalities. This led to his becoming an ardent and sincere follower of Periyar in his Self-Respect Movement. The Justice Party that had become the abode of the favoured few and the privileged classes of society, was converted into a mass movement by Anna under the leadership of Periyar and renamed Dravidar Kazhagam at the Salem Conference in the year 1944. This very resolution which brought the party "from palace to platform" (as Anna later claimed) was known as the 'Annadurai Resolution'. During his career as a social reformer he had edited some Tamil dailies — *Navayugam*, *Kudiyarasu* and *Viduthalai*. In the year 1942 he started a weekly journal called the *Dravida Nadu* to expound the principles and philosophies of the Dravidian Movement. *Dravida Nadu* caught the imagination of the masses like wild-fire and became the most popular weekly of its time.

Owing to his differences with Periyar, Anna parted company with the Dravidar Kazhagam and formed a new party known as the Dravidar Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) on 17th September 1949, on the birthday of his political guru Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy. Probably in recent history this was the first organised South Indian political movement to fight against injustice meted out to South Indians. The main goal of the party was to establish a new society based on the three cardinal principles of democracy, rationalism and socialism. In order to achieve this goal, the party felt it

necessary to resist northern domination and to work for the formation of a separate independent sovereign Federation of Dravidian Socialistic Republics, comprising the present four southern States of India—TamilNadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka. Anna worked hard to mobilise support and sympathy for his philosophy from the masses.

During the first seven years of the DMK's history, it did not want to contest the General Elections or capture political power. It was at the historic Tiruchirapalli Conference in 1956 that the DMK took an opinion-poll and decided to contest the General Elections in 1957. Anna said, "We realised that we must either be politically capacitated or be ruined by democracy," as he launched his youthful party into the election fray. The DMK, won 15 seats in the Assembly and Anna entered the State Legislature as the leader of this small but eloquent and effective opposition.

In 1959, in the Civic Elections of Madras, the DMK captured the majority of seats and, on 24th April 1959, the first DMK Mayor was sworn into office. In the 1962 General Elections, though Anna was defeated in his home-town Kanchipuram, his party won 50 seats in the Assembly. Anna was elected to the Rajya Sabha and went to Delhi, where he distinguished himself as a brilliant orator and authentic spokesman of Dravida Nadu.

It was in the year 1962 that the entire country was shocked by the invasion of the Chinese across the Himalayan borders. The shock was more intense and severe to Anna because it was the first time that Anna was led to review his own goal of achieving an independent Dravida Nadu. In fact at that time he was serving his sentence in Vellore Jail for his part in agitating against the rising prices. Without any hesitation whatsoever he came out with a bold statement advising his followers : "In our anger against the Congress regime, we should not commit the mistake of slackening our efforts against the foreign invader. We of the DMK consider it our sacred duty to rush to the help of the Indian Government in its efforts to protect and safeguard the sovereignty of our soil." Anna felt that in times of external danger like the Chinese invasion, Indians should march as one people. Subsequent to this, the Government of India came with a Constitutional Amendment Bill which debarred any secessionist party from contesting the General Elections. Anna was not prepared to commit political harakiri by clinging to a demand that the changed circumstances of the country did not justify. He gradually realised that he could

still win his battle within the framework of the Indian Union. Accordingly the Constitution of the DMK Party was amended in such a way as to work for a closer Dravidian Union of the four linguistic States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka within the framework of the Indian Constitution by obtaining more powers for the States to the extent possible.

The year 1967 was a water-shed in the history of Tamil Nadu. It was at that time that the Fourth General Elections were held. The grand strategist and shrewd tactician that he was, Anna realised the defective electoral system prevailing in a country like India, where a party could be elected to power even with minority votes while the majority votes were shared by a number of opposition political parties. He worked out an understanding among all the opposition political parties in Tamil Nadu, covering both the extreme Rightists like the Swatantra and the extreme Leftists like the Marxist Party. He gave a slogan to all the opposition parties : "United we stand, divided we fall." This worked wonders even beyond Anna's expectations. The results of the General Election came as a surprise to many and a shock to a few. It was a landslide victory and a clean walkover for Anna's party. The Congress Party in Tamil Nadu had collapsed like a house of cards. The DMK won all the 25 seats it had contested for the Lok Sabha and 138 of the 173 seats in the State Assembly. The Congress got a meagre three Lok Sabha seats and fifty Assembly seats, though they had contested all the available seats. The President of the All-India Congress Party was defeated by a 28-year-old DMK student in his home town. All except one of the Members of the Tamilnadu Cabinet, including the Chief Minister, were defeated. One Union Cabinet Minister and two Union Deputy Ministers were also defeated. This was the first time in the history of India that the people of a State voted an opposition party into power with such a thumping majority.

On 6th March 1967, the DMK Government was sworn in, with Anna as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. In Anna's Cabinet, the youngest was only 32 years old. The rest, except for Anna himself who was 58, were below 48 years of age. The party presented a picture of youthful vitality. The Members of his Ministry travelled in small cars and drew a salary of Rs. 500/- a month. As Chief Minister, Anna himself set an example by continuing to live at his unpretentious residence at Avenue Road, Nungambakkam. Taxes on dry lands were abolished. Rice was

sold at one rupee a measure in the cities of Madras, Coimbatore and suburban areas. Pre-university education was made free for the children of those parents whose annual income did not exceed Rs. 1,500/-.

Anna went abroad to the United States and Japan during this period. He was awarded the honour of Sub-Fellowship at the Yale University in the United States. In the year 1968, the Annamalai University at its convocation held at Chidambaram conferred on him a Doctorate.

Anna's administration succeeded in projecting the image of his Government as truly representative of the man in the street. Though the period of his Chief Ministership was short, his achievements were many. As a rationalist, Anna got legislation passed legalising simple marriages performed without priestly intervention, in keeping with the self-respect principles preached by the social revolutionary Periyar decades before him. The State under Anna's leadership also was the first in India to foster and encourage inter-caste marriages by awarding gold medals for every inter-caste couple.

A cause which was dear to his heart all through his life was his abundant and abiding love for Tamil. It was this cause which made him popular, and also sent him to jail both in the first and last instances in his political career. In his unrelenting resistance, he expressed the anger and the deep frustration of the people. It was their sentiments he echoed, when he proclaimed to the Rajya Sabha : "My language is two thousand years old. If you drink deep of the nectar of the Tamil classics, you will want only Tamil to be the National Language." When he became the Chief Minister, he achieved his aim of elimination of the domination of Hindi from Tamilnadu by having a resolution passed in the State Assembly, adopting the two-language formula, i.e., Tamil and English in Tamilnadu, in a special session convened for this purpose.

As one who worked for the renaissance of the Tamils and believed that only by furthering the cause of the Tamils, would he be able to achieve a new society, it was a historic event for his homeland to be re-named 'Tamilnadu'. At long last the land of the Tamils regained her proper name which she had lost after the second century B.C. Anna himself spoke with pride of these three achievements of his regime as 'historic'.

The secret of his phenomenal hold over the masses deserves study. Some argue that it was his brilliant oratorical capacity. Of course a vital ingredient of Anna's charisma was his eloquence.

His consummate mastery of words had earned for him the endearing appellation, Alliteration Annadurai even as a student at Pachaiyappa's College. He attracted all college students by his oratory in both English and Tamil. He had the ability to stir and stimulate, while conveying his deep and genuine concern for the people. Though he could engage in adroit verbal gymnastics when occasion demanded, he spoke to his *thambis* in words simple and easily understood by the most illiterate. Speaking extempore, he could hold forth on almost any subject. In fact, he once made a brilliant speech on 'no topic' when the organisers of the meeting told him that there was no topic scheduled for the meeting.

Anna was perhaps the first politician in India who raised money for his party by selling tickets for his public meetings. His party, in its days of struggle, was not supported either by the landlords or the industrialists and had to depend on the middle class and the common people. People flocked to listen to Anna and other DMK leaders and bought tickets for the meetings as they would do to see a movie. This was a unique experiment in Indian politics which Anna innovated.

Anna's style was perfectly tailored to his purpose. He spoke to the illiterate masses who needed time and elaborate explanations to digest complicated concepts. So he chose two or three salient features, and discussed them from various angles, reiterating each point with witty examples and logical arguments. It was this strategy which made him such an effective mass leader.

Anna spoke equally well in Tamil and English. His hard-hitting maiden speech in the Rajya Sabha convinced the Members of his mastery of English. Thereafter, whenever he stood up to speak, everyone sat up to listen. This unique craftsman of words spoke of the 'bloodless revolution of the ballot boxes' and denounced 'men who hankered after the loaves and fishes of office.'

He used his irrepressible sense of humour to cut through tense situations and sooth frayed tempers. In the Tamilnadu Assembly, an Opposition Member, Thiru K. Vinayakam enquired about the implementation of the Water Supply Scheme at Tiruttani where the famous shrine of Lord Subrahmanya is situated. Anna remarked with a smile : "I am glad Vinayakam, the elder brother, takes such an interest in the temple of his younger brother Lord Subrahmanya." At an American Press Conference, when questioned about his policy on abortion, he came right back with "We abhor abortion."

It is claimed by some others that the people showered affection on him for his outstanding contribution to the field of literature. It is true that Anna had his own distinct style both in the method of his writings and in the manner of choosing his themes. His style was a complete breakaway from the old difficult and artificial style into a new, simple but musical one. It can as well be said that he ushered in an era of 'literacy revolution' by which literature instead of limiting itself to intellectual circles reached out to large masses outside.

His books of that time numbering about thirty, were all best-sellers. His plays *Velaikkari*, *Oor Iravu* and *Sorgavasal* were compared to those of Bernard Shaw by critics like Kalki Krishnamurthi. It is gratifying to note that later on when they were made into films, they were most popular and successful.

Apart from writing prose and poetry, short stories and novels, dramas and satires, he himself acted in several plays, such as *Chandra Mohan*, *Chandrodayam* and *Needhi Dhevan Mayakkam*, written and popularised by himself. The number of English and Tamil dailies and weeklies edited by him is eloquent testimony to his journalistic calibre and vigour.

As an author and actor, playwright and poet, satirist and statesman, Anna combined in himself excellence in every field of literary activity. His entry into the field of Tamil literature ushered in an era when a new style was born, now emulated by so many others.

There are still several others who think that Anna owed his popularity to his skilful conduct of political affairs. For the first time in the field of politics Anna brought to bear the relationship of a closely knit family in running his political party. In the DMK the members formed themselves into a family of *thambis* led by Anna (their elder brother). The word 'Anna' means in Tamil 'elder brother'. His leadership was supreme. His decision was final, not because he was a tyrant who compelled blind obedience as leader of the Party, but because he was their beloved Anna who inspired devotion and evoked enthusiasm. Anna, as a loving elder brother, merely guided them. The extreme opposite of an arrogant political boss who ruthlessly stifles initiative and leadership among his followers, Anna believed in sharing responsibility and fostering talent. That is why the DMK has so many popular leaders and effective orators. They were encouraged to speak, to organise conferences and lead agitations. Anna took great

pride in their achievements and graciously acknowledged their success in public. No wonder to his *thambis* his slightest wish was law. In all party disputes, an appeal from Anna brought his *thambis* back into line. This close-knit unity, inspired confidence in an electorate disgusted with the ugly factional in-fighting within the Congress Party.

But for the courage and confidence Anna possessed it would not have been possible for him to attract such a large number of talented young men. The very fact that he formed a political party independent of any other national organisation at that time when the feeling and fervour of nationalism was so high in India, was a clear demonstration of his courage and conviction. Every other political party in the country, including the Communist Party, was schooled in Congress traditions and its leaders had been followers of Mahatma Gandhi at one time or other. It was patriotic and fashionable to have been the camp followers of Gandhi and Nehru and echo the glories of a resurgent united India. To a leader of his eminence and ability the highest positions in the country would have been open had he taken the line of least resistance and walked on the popular side of the road. Anna and the DMK Party were exceptions. At such a time, to speak of the identity of his own people, to fight for their rights, to stand against the domination of one part of the country by another and to point out the injustices meted out to his people, required phenomenal courage.

Even before Independence, Anna proved himself a patriot under very trying circumstances. At that time, he was an active disciplined member of the DK. Periyar was his only political guru. The fiery old rationalist declared that Independence Day was to be observed as a day of mourning. The young Anna courageously wrote an editorial in the *Dravida Nadu* pointing out that the DK had condemned foreign rule as early as 1939. "Even while the anti-Hindi agitation was at its height, we passed a resolution demanding complete independence. We have made it clear on many occasions that our opposition to the Congress must not be misconstrued as opposition to freedom." He called on all Dravidians to celebrate Independence Day as a day of deliverance. He was severely censured by Periyar for his 'impertinence'.

Anna never in his entire career failed to challenge any injustice in public life. He presented a picture of an undaunted hero fighting a fire-breathing dragon. After all, what is courage? As

Confucious said, "If you see what is right and don't do it, you are a man without courage." Courage is nothing but fighting injustice, which Anna did.

His compatriots attributed his fame to his sincerity of purpose, spirit of selfless service and sacrifice to his cause. It is very rare among politicians to follow up their words by deeds. But Anna was one to practise what he preached. Whether it happened to be a black-flag demonstration or burning a chapter in the Constitution or for that matter any agitation, and courting imprisonment, Anna as leader was in the forefront. As many as eight times he courted imprisonment for the cause in which he sincerely believed. His movement was always planned in advance, programmed in minute detail, implemented without violence, and it culminated in success. Though he was different in many respects from Mahatma Gandhi it was still a paradox that they had certain common characteristics of staging peaceful and non-violent agitations. He was not one of those who sent his volunteers to action, himself remaining aloof or underground. He considered his means as important as his ends. He always believed in openness of mind and in the free and frank exposition of his cause. 'Growth with stability' was his motto. Step by step was his method. This evoked the admiration and active support of the common folk who anxiously waited to carry out his command at any moment.

Nothing is more precious than one's own life. But for Anna it was different. When he fell ill in the second year of office as Chief Minister, he was suspected of being stricken with cancer. Immediately he was taken to the United States where Dr. Miller treated him. As Anna was very weak and failing in health, Dr. Miller advised him to take complete rest in an air-conditioned bungalow and to cut down travel to the minimum, and if this was unavoidable, he must do so in an air-conditioned car. But to Anna for whom simplicity was a way of life, that was really a threat to his very philosophy and way of life. He had to choose only one of the two alternatives : either to live for some more time or to die for his simplicity. Even before his landing in Tamil Nadu, the people were so anxious about his health that the Government of Tamil Nadu had decided to air-condition a bungalow and to provide him with a new imported air-conditioned car. But to the shock of many, Anna chose not to live in an air-conditioned bungalow and not to travel in a luxury car but preferred to stay in his unostentatious residence and to travel in a small indigenous

car. Even when an offer was made to air-condition at least a room in his residence he rejected it forthright. Such was his tenacious attachment to the simple way of living even at the risk to his own life. To the last till his life deserted him, he did not desert simplicity. His humility was such that even his worst political adversaries had great regard for him. For all the talents he possessed he would have been excused if he had been arrogant. But he was never so. He was so humble in his approach that even after his massive victory in the 1967 General Elections, he made it a point to secure the blessings of all his political opponents before assuming office.

In particular, when he called on his political guru Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy at Tiruchirapalli after his dissociation with him for eighteen years, it was a pleasant surprise even to Periyar. The grand old patriarch was moved to tears when he embraced Anna after such a long time. As Periyar himself on a subsequent occasion stated, he was absolutely embarrassed to receive Anna especially after his vehement criticism of the latter over a long period of eighteen years.

It is said that he who makes history has no private life. Anna who made history had no such life of his own. Anna had not even the slightest wish to amass wealth for himself. Had he desired to do so, he could have become the richest by his own writings and speeches. But his integrity was such that when he died, the only property he left behind was the love of his people. This prince among men, to whom the people would have given anything, died in debt and his widow had to be helped by his Party out of financial difficulties.

The yardstick for measuring greatness has differed from age to age and from country to country ; but our people for ages have always placed character and integrity above all as a yardstick for measuring greatness. His character and integrity above all are responsible for Anna's charisma.

To fulfil the ambition of the dead is the responsibility of the living. To complete the task of the dead is the duty of the living. What were his ambitions and what were his tasks ? His ambition was to form a new society based on the principles of democracy, rationalism and socialism for Dravidians in their own style and suited to their own genius. It was his firm faith that this was the only way to achieve the liberation of the common man from the evils of exploitation. It is well known that his concern for the

common man was so great that he considered himself one among them. Writing to his *thambis* in *Dravida Nadu* he observed : “ You and I are common men — me specially a common man, called upon to shoulder uncommon responsibilities.”

He believed that “ democracy is not a form of government alone, it is an invitation to a new life, an experiment in the art of sharing responsibilities and benefits, an attempt to generate and coordinate the inherent energy in each individual for the common task.” Hence, we cannot waste a single talent, or impoverish or allow a single man or woman to be stunted in growth or be held under tyranny.

Rationalism was his religion. He hated the cant and hypocrisy, the blind superstition and corruption which had obscured the purity of religion. He stood against idol worship, the regimented rigours of organised religion, and *karma* and God’s will being quoted in season and out by vested interests to justify inaction against the bondage and poverty of his people. He believed in real faith, in faith which aspired to feed the hungry and comfort the suffering. “ True faith in God is deep faith in human beings,” as he himself said in one of his films, *Sorgavasal*. That true faith was his religion.

His socialism was scientific. He never confined himself to the four walls of set doctrines and never-changing dogmas. He wished society to rid itself of exploitation of all kinds. In fact Anna wrote : “ Concentration of wealth in the hands of a few is like a deluge. That would destroy not only the weaker sections of society but even those possessing it.” His entire economic philosophy was based on the socialistic approach of ensuring a good and decent living for one and all.

This is the message left by our revered Anna to his *thambis*, this his gospel.

This collection of his speeches in the Rajya Sabha at New Delhi which I ventured to edit and publish is my humble homage to our departed leader. I hope this will rekindle among the Dravidian people of my generation and the generations to follow, a desire to know more about Anna, and the ideals for which he lived, worked and died.

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1

Challenge from Dravida Nadu

LAUNCHING THE OFFENSIVE

April 1962

Anna's maiden speech at the Rajya Sabha was on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address to the Session of Parliament in April 1962. It was a scathing indictment of the Government of India, a clever caricature of its policies. For the first time, the echoes of resurgent neo-nationalism were heard at the Capital, heard as a convincing logical concept, from an accredited leader of a political party elected by the Legislators of that Party to represent them in the Rajya Sabha. The demand for a separate 'Dravida Nadu' comprising the four Southern States, was seriously and solemnly made in the Indian Parliament.

Anna had established his reputation as a most outstanding Tamil speaker of his generation ; but the Members of the Rajya Sabha were agreeably surprised to listen to his maiden speech delivered in English with eloquence, fluency, and conviction. Anna's attempt was to persuade his colleagues in the Rajya Sabha to see reason and logic in his demand for a separate Dravida Nadu.

This maiden speech of Anna's was so thought-provoking that the speakers who followed him discussed and analysed it far more than the President's Address itself.

REVERED Chairman, I thank you for having given me this opportunity to associate myself with the observations made in this august assembly. Of course, I was a bit hesitant to take part in the discussions of this session because I thought that my method ought to be to listen and learn rather than talk and rake up controversies. But the very congenial atmosphere that I find here has emboldened me to join the rich chorus of praise that has been showered upon the President of this great country. I join the others in paying my tributes to the unstinted services of our President, though he is in failing health, and when I pay a tribute to Babu Rajendra Prasad,

the President, I do not claim to have been a camp-follower of the President. I do not identify with the ideologies of the political party to which he is wedded. I was admiring the very able effort of the President from a vast distance. Perhaps that gives me strength as well as weakness. Weakness in the sense that I cannot have the same amount of warmth that others who have worked along with him would have claimed. Strength because the tribute I pay to the President is not to be construed as a dutiful partyman's tribute to another partyman, but of one who having seen from a distance the unstinted service of the President, pays the tribute that is due to him. Therefore, Sir, while I express my respect, when I pay my tribute to the Hon. President, I have to couple it unfortunately with a sense of disappointment with the Address that he has delivered. As students of constitutional history know, it is only the Government that is speaking through the President and therefore any remark, bitter or otherwise, which is stated about the Address, is not to be construed — and I am very confident it would not be construed — as anything against the President. In spite of the President, the Government has failed to deliver the goods, as it were. Therefore, Sir, Members on the opposite side have certain sentiments to express about that.

I have had the benefit of having listened to a veritable discourse on planning by the Father of Planning, if I may call him so, the Hon. Mr V. T. Krishnamachari. But on going through the President's Address, I find that it reads more like the prospectus of a company rather than a message of hope and ideals — prospectus of a company because that company today seems to be in need of more and more members — prospectus of a company because that company has been found to be needy. Therefore, Sir, throughout the speeches from the ruling party on the Address and the Motion of Thanks, I found a sort of jubilation, a sort of elation on their part — “Oh, we have been elected by the people for three consecutive terms. Therefore, whatever we say is correct, whatever we do is correct and the smaller parties have no right to question our rights and our prerogatives.”

Sir, I may point out, that after having won a victory in the General Elections, any party has got the right to be jubilant. But may I, with your permission, point out to the ruling party, that it is not very astounding for a well-organised and well-founded party like the Congress to win the elections pitted as it is against opposition groups of varied interests and varied ideologies? May

I point out, Sir, that the strength of the Congress does not lie in itself ; the strength of the Congress lies in the weakness of the opposition parties. Therefore, instead of being jubilant over the victory, the ruling party should learn to be humble, magnanimous, liberal and democratic. Therefore, the very first thought, the very first sentiment that Members on this side were pleased to state, was about the corrupt practices in elections.

Sir, as the Members on this side spoke about the corrupt practices in the elections, the people of the ruling party rose to ask whether it could be proved. Sir, may I point out that if we were able to lay our hands on proofs, we could have dragged them into courts of law rather than come to this august assembly to present our sentiments ? It is not always easy for parties placed at a disadvantage to produce proofs. We lay more emphasis on the philosophic side rather than the legal side of the matter. Did we not see some time ago, strictures from High Courts, that the ruling party — though it may be legal on their part to take donations from industrial firms, it is highly immoral — got their weapons from the armoury of the Tatas and the Birlas ? They did not find it below their dignity even to go to the Mundhras for funds. Has the country forgotten from where their election fund was built up ? Is it on this basis that the ruling party is jubilant ? Perhaps, the ruling party Member might say that corrupt practices can be found in other political parties too. But as the premier political party of this vast sub-continent, is it not the duty of the Congress to set high traditions ? I am reminded, Sir, of the saying of Sanskrit Pandits, “Yatha raja tatha praja”. Whatever traditions the Congress sets, other political parties may follow. I conveniently use the word “may” because “may” implies “may not” also. Therefore, our first point is that this election was not fair and free and the people’s will was not legitimately consulted. Therefore, if at least during the next elections the ruling party does not associate itself with the protagonists of free bonus, profiteers and permit-mongers, and as Mr Ganga Sharan Sinha stated the other day, if Members of the ruling party and the Cabinet resign at least six months before the general elections, I challenge Sir, the ruling party to come back to power. Therefore, the first ingredient that the President wants in his Address is that we should build up high democratic traditions by dissociating ourselves from the—

N. SRI RAMA REDDY (*Mysore*): Is there any democratic precedent for this ?

CHAIRMAN: He is asking whether there is any democratic precedent for resigning six months earlier.

BHUPESH GUPTA (*West Bengal*): There is hardly any precedent, Sir, to interrupt a maiden speech.

Of course, Sir, this is my maiden speech, I am not bashful of interruptions therefore, I like them.

The second point I want to make on the President's Address is, that I understand that three cardinal principles are being enunciated in the President's Address — democracy, socialism and nationalism. As far as democracy is concerned, unless we have proportional representation coupled with a system of referendum initiated in a vast sub-continent like this, you cannot have any utility for democracy. I regret that the President in his address, has not given the shortcomings of democracy as it has been worked out for the past ten or fifteen years. I would request this House to consider the matter, whether it is not necessary and expedient now at least to have a free thinking on the tenets of democracy.

About socialism, Sir, the other day I found in this House a new meaning given to socialism. When my Hon. friend, Sri Ramamurthi was telling the House about the big industrial concerns, the Tatas and Birlas, I found the Hon. Member giving an amazing interpretation of shares and profits. He was pleased to say that though crores and crores of rupees are gathered as profit, it does not go to the coffers of the individual capitalists like the Tatas and Birlas, but is being disbursed to the shareholders. Sir, if that is the economic interpretation, why do we have two sectors, public and private? If my Hon. friend thinks that private is public, the private industries controlled by Tatas and Birlas are after all public, why make a differentiation between public and private? Sir, he was far off the mark when he said that these shares and profits were distributed and disbursed.

Sir, we have had Committees which have gone into the question and they have stated that powerful, industrial empires have been built up, monopolies have grown. I find that the Prime Minister of this country has stated that the question should be looked into. I understand that a Committee is working and they are going to find out how and where the amount of wealth produced by the two Plans has gone. Therefore, Sir, instead of arguing that socialism is to be of a different kind, give it some other name; why drag in the name of socialism and give your own interpretation to socialism? Socialism is not mere welfare, because socialism is

something other than guaranteeing welfare. It works to create inequality. I am aware, according to Laski, that equality is not identity of treatment, but affording equal opportunities for all. But in this country of ours, can we say that equal opportunities have been given, or are being given to all? What about the Scheduled Castes, what about the Backward Classes?

Some time ago, I read in the papers that there was a conference at Hyderabad of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes wherein the Prime Minister and the Hon. Mr Jagjivan Ram were present, not to present a united front but to give varied opinions. The Prime Minister was said to have stated there that distinctions like Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes were not to be allowed hereafter. Mr Jagjivan Ram, naturally enough, rose to say that the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes needed patronage because they have been driven to the last rung of society. If two such stalwarts can hold different views and remain in the same party, is it any wonder, Sir, that there is difference in ideology between the ruling party and other parties? Therefore, the interpretation given to socialism and the implementation of socialism are not leading us towards socialism.

Here, I have to refer to what a great friend of India, an admirer of the Government, the Ambassador of the United States of America and an economist, Dr Galbraith, says about our socialism. He has called it 'post-office socialism'. Why does Professor Galbraith call it 'post-office socialism'? He says that public enterprises should be run to maximise revenues, that is to say, profits, in a developing country like India. The idea is that the profits made should in turn be ploughed back into the unit, should be reinvested, and should be used for the good of the people. Just now we have been hearing the observations of the Hon. Member, Sri V. T. Krishnamachari. He was stating that in the public projects, whether they be irrigation projects or power projects or industrial projects, the returns are not up to the mark. I would say that much money has been sunk in the public sector. But neither have the targets been reached nor are the returns commensurate with the efforts taken or the sonnets sung about Sindri or Bhakra or other projects.

Sir, I would hasten to state that I must not be misconstrued to mean that I am against planning or against the public sector. I am all for planning and all for the public sector, but if in the public sector the return is so meagre; if in the implementation of the

public sector there is so much of wastage we have to examine it carefully. There are rumours about corruption. I am not in a position to present facts and figures, but the rumour is widespread that there is corruption and maladministration and other evils connected with the public sector. Therefore, I feel that the President should have stated in his Address, that in spite of having the vision of socialism, we are not moving towards that socialism.

The third point, which is a point that is very intimate so far as the party to which I have the honour to belong is concerned, is nationalism. Or to put it in a term which has become very current now, I would call it 'national integration'. But, Sir, before coming to the point and to the nature or method to be followed for national integration, may I point out that to think about national integration fifteen years after independence, fifteen years after the working of a national government, is something which is against all that we have been thinking and doing all these years. Are we to take, Sir, that all the efforts of the national leaders all these years have not been fruitful? Why is it that we are forced today to speak or to chalk out methods, of national integration? We from the South, especially from Tamil Nad, while we are sitting here, find the Hon. Members though they know English, speaking in Hindi and asking questions in Hindi and getting answers in Hindi. At that time I find a twinkle in their eye, as if to say "You people, unless you learn Hindi, you have to keep quiet!" Is that the way to national integration? Sir, may I, even at the expense of being misunderstood, point out that the very term "national integration" is a contradiction in terms? People integrated become a nation and if they become a nation, where is the necessity for integration? Therefore, that term 'national integration' shows the poverty of ideas which has been holding us up all this time. I would, therefore, say this: let us rethink. We have a Constitution, of course. Stalwarts of this country sat and devised the Constitution. But the time has come for a re-thinking, for a re-appraisal, for a re-valuation and for a re-interpretation of the word 'nation'.

I claim Sir, to come from a country, a part in India now, but which I think is of a different stock, not necessarily antagonistic. I belong to the Dravidian stock. I am proud to call myself a Dravidian. That does not mean that I am against a Bengali or a Maharashtrian or a Gujarati. As Robert Burns has stated, "A man is a man for all that." I say that I belong to the Dravidian

stock and that is only because I consider that the Dravidians have got something concrete, something distinct, something different to offer to the nation at large. Therefore it is that we want self-determination.

After coming here, I must say that many times I have found great kindness in the Hon. Members. I did not expect so much kindness when I came here. I find that this kindness even makes me forget the animosities that had been created by certain Hindi-speaking people. I would very much like to be one with you. I would very much like to be with you as one nation. But a wish is one thing and facts are another. We want one world, one government. But we forget national frontiers. The other day I found the Hon. Member Mr. Dayabhai Patel speak and when he spoke about Gujarat, there was such fire in his words and about such an industrially advanced State, Gujarat, he speaks thus : "I come from Gujarat, I am talking of Gujarat," and so on. Take my State of Madras. It is backward taking into consideration everything. You have here four steel plants. We have been crying hoarse for a decade and more for a steel plant, but what have they given us ? They gave the portfolio to a new Minister, not the steel industry to us. Perhaps, if the Hon. Subramaniam had not come here he might have been pressing for the steel industry from there. Is it diplomacy or prudence or political expediency ? I don't know which — but you have brought him here and you are going to ask him to reply to the demand of the South. That is what the British were doing — divide and rule, barter and get money, marshall out figures and demolish arguments.

The fact that we want separation is not to be misconstrued as being antagonistic. Of course, I can understand the feelings that would very naturally arise in the minds of people in the northern area, whenever they think of partition. I know the terrible consequences of partition and I am deeply sympathetic towards them. But our separation is entirely different from the partition which has brought about Pakistan. I would even say that if sympathetic treatment is afforded, there need be no heat generated. There would not be any dire consequences. Fortunately, the South itself is a sort of a geographical unit. We call it the Deccan plateau or the peninsula. There will not be a large number of people migrating from this place to that. There will not be any refugee problem. I would ask you to very calmly bestow deep and sympathetic thought on the problem.

JOSEPH MATHEN (*Kerala*): And what will be the language of the Southern States ?

Sir, the language and other details will be worked out by a Constituent Assembly. The position to-day is, whatever may be your reading of the situation, for whatever we do not get in the South, the masses are ready to lay the entire blame on the Indian Government. There will be very natural reasons for not opening certain industries there, but the moment we are denied a steel plant, the moment we are denied new railway lines, the moment we are denied an oil refinery, the man in the street in the South gets up and says, "This is the way of Delhi. This is the way of northern imperialism and unless you come out of that imperialism you are not going to make your country safe, sound, plentiful and progressive." When I talk about separation, I represent the resurgent view of the South and as the illustrious person, Mira Behn, stated some time ago, the natural unity that we found when we were opposing the British is not to be construed as a permanent affair. The principle of separation or, to put it more explicitly, the principle of self-determination, has been accepted by leaders of international repute and more than that, by the Prime Minister of this sub-continent of ours. During the days of the Pakistan controversy, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, speaking, if I remember correctly, on the Kapurthala grounds, stated categorically that they, the Congress, as an organisation, would try to keep every unit within the Indian Union ; but if any Indian unit decided to secede, the Congress would give its consent. Thus, the Congress has recognised the principle of self-determination. I make this bold appeal to that liberal thought, to that democratic spirit. Despite the fact that he has become the Prime Minister, I think part of the old fire is still burning in his heart. Why don't you give self-determination to peninsular India ? After that, India will not be impoverished. I would say that that decision would pave the way for raising the stature of India. I am inviting those people who want to keep India one and indivisible to make it a comity of nations instead of its being a medley of disgruntled units here and there.

Sir, whenever Members representing different units get up and plead for this project or that project, do they not to that extent forget that India is one and indivisible ? Did not our Maharashtra friends, when they wanted a Maharashtra State, forget that India was one and indivisible ? Was not the Bengali infuriated when Berubari was taken away and switched over to Pakistan ? Was

not Bihar infuriated over the claims of Orissa ? Is it not a fact that animosity was created over language between Assam and Bengal ? While I want that supreme Indian unity and ideology, just to brush aside other things by saying that these are all regionalism, parochialism and the like, is to burke it. I would like this House to face this issue squarely and grant self-determination for that part of the country from which I come, the Dravidian part.

N. M. LINGAM (*Madras*) : Why can't self-determination be granted, following your logic, to all the States constituting the Union ? That would be logical.

Well, my Hon. friend can advocate that. I am pleading for separation of Dravida Nadu not because of any antagonism but because, if it is separated, it will become a small nation, compact, homogeneous and united, wherein sections of people in the whole area can have a community of sentiment. Then we can make economic regeneration more effective and social regeneration more fruitful.

Sir, it was only ten days ago that I came to Delhi. I did not wander or saunter along all the avenues, but wherever I went, I found avenues, new roads, parks — they are to be found in New Delhi. Why is it, Sir, that it did not occur to the Indian Government that a single avenue be named after a Southerner ?

LAKSHMI MENON (*The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs*) : There is the Thyagaraja Road.

Does that mean that people of the South will have to be second rate citizens ?

N. SRI RAMA REDDY : There is the Thyagaraja Road named after the great musician-saint.

AN HON. MEMBER : What more do you want ?

Interruptions

Sir, I am surprised at the advocacy of the Hon. Mr Lingam. If he is satisfied with Sri Theagaraya — or is it the Thyagaraja of Kirtana fame — Road, if he is satisfied with that, I beg to submit that it is not enough for the South. Come to any southern town. You can saunter in Motilal Nehru Park ; you can enter the Jawaharlal Nehru Reading Room ; you can go to the Kamala Nehru Hospital.

N. SRI RAMA REDDY : That shows integration.

You can motor through Abul Kalam Azad Road. Why is it that such a thing is not found in this part of the country ? And, Sir, look at the sentiments of the Southerners. When I am pleading for the South it is only my southern friends who come and say,

“Don’t plead ; we are quite all right.” This is due to the fear complex instilled in the mind of representatives of the South, because if they plead for something, they are dubbed separatists and it may be taken that these people have joined the DMK and, therefore, their political future might be lost. That is why people get up and say, “Oh, you have got this road and that road.” Am I not aware of that ? I am as fully aware of that as Members from the South of other political parties are. I am pleading for a national cause, not for parochialism, not for party principle. I want that this great State of ours should have self-determination, so that it can contribute its mite to the whole world, because, Sir, we have got a culture peculiar to us.

I am reminded, Sir, of your very scholarly statement made some time ago that India is united because Rama and Krishna are being worshipped and venerated from the Himalayas right up to Cape Comorin. So too is Jesus held in respect and veneration throughout the world. Yet you have nation-states in Europe and new and newer nation-states are coming up in the world.

Therefore, I regret very much that the President has not stated anything about the neo-nationalism that is surging up in the South. Sir, I have stated that there are three tenets, democracy, socialism and nationalism. I would conclude by saying that democracy is distorted, socialism is emaciated and nationalism misinterpreted. I think in the coming years there will be a new sense of appreciation and the needs and philosophy of the South will be better understood, and self-determination accorded to Dravida Nad from where I have the honour to come.

Thank you.

STOCK-TAKING

February 1966

General Elections were expected to be held in India in early 1967 and therefore February 1966 was the last opportunity for the Government of the day to summarise its aims, objectives and achievements through that year's Presidential Address. The Presidential Address was in the nature of a stock-taking on what the Government had achieved. It was also equally an opportunity for leaders of the Opposition to take a critical look at the achievements of the Government prior to the impending General Elections. As the Leader of the DMK Party, who was to come to power in the then State of Madras in early 1967, Anna was utilising the occasion of the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address to do his own stock-taking of the problems facing the country. He found no rationale for the continuance of emergency legislations and Defence of India Regulations which were enacted following the Chinese attack in 1962 and demanded their repeal. He deplored the non-availability of even drinking water in some parts of the country. He condemned the pathetic dependence of the country on foreign aid and import of food grains even after 18 years of Independence. He spoke of the grinding poverty of the masses and widespread all-round frustration in the country.

Anna's debating skill consisted in proving the inefficiency, corruption and mismanagement of the Congress Party by quoting from what the accredited spokesmen of that party including its President had said. He quoted the then President of the Congress, Thiru K. Kamaraj Nadar to say that his party "has not succeeded in lessening let alone removing the disparity between the rich and poor." He quoted others like Acharya Vinobha Bhave and Gulzarilal Nanda. Raising the spectre of a violent revolution he warned that the angry new generation cannot be fed by the harvest of the gladness of the past generation.*

In the General Elections that followed in 1967, the Congress Party at the Centre fared badly and had to depend on the support

* The Tamil form of address for "Mr" or "Shri".

of the DMK and Members of other Progressive Parties in Parliament for carrying out its policies and programmes till the General Elections in 1971 following the Congress split gave that Party an absolute majority in the Parliament. In the 1967 General Elections, many stalwarts of the Congress Party were repudiated by the electorates in their own constituencies including the then Congress President, Thiru K. Kamaraj Nadar. The DMK Party led by Anna was given a massive mandate to rule the State of Madras which was one of the Congress strongholds.

MADAM Deputy Chairman, for the second time in the President's Address, it is unfortunate that it has opened with a poignant note about the sad, sudden and shocking demise of the late lamented Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri. Last time the President had expressed poignancy over the demise of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This time, this twice-orphaned nation has been asked to bear the shock of the demise of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri. I share, just as everyone here and elsewhere shares, the feelings of poignancy expressed by the President in his Address. He lived and died in harness working studiously, vigorously and considerately for the uplift of this country. Wherever and whenever the pursuit of peace is undertaken by sincere men, the memory of that great soul will remain as a guiding star and lead not only this nation, but every nation interested in peace and concord to chalk out the path of peace. I pay my humble tribute to the memory of that great soul.

My friend, Professor Mukut Behari Lal regretted that the President's Address does not contain the word 'socialism'. Curiously enough, I am happy that the word is not there, not because I do not like that word, I like it immensely. But to include that word in the policies and programmes of this Government would be a debasement of socialism.

Coming to the last, but not the least, of his achievements, I consider, as many here and outside this country do consider, that the Tashkent Declaration is the morning star of hope. Even those who have their doubts about the Tashkent Declaration, are only apprehensive over the fact that it should not be shadowed into a sort of Munich. They want peace with Pakistan, they want concord

and good neighbourly relations with that country. But many of the pronouncements being made from time to time on the floor of this House and outside by people who ought to have been more responsible have created misapprehensions in the minds of genuinely interested people. However, as the Tashkent Declaration leads us to a climate of friendship and good neighbourliness, I welcome it along with many other political parties in this country.

The President in his Address has stated that our relations with foreign countries are very friendly. They are friendly in a demonstrative way. Even a couple of days ago, we had the Hungarian Prime Minister visiting this country and having consultations with our Prime Minister. On that day, as I was walking along one of the bazaars in Delhi city, I found two young men conversing with each other. They saw the two flags flying, fluttering, together and one young man asked the other, "Who is visiting this country." ? He replied, "The Prime Minister of Hungary is visiting this country." And the other young man said, of course in a jocular way : "Oh ! The Prime Minister of Hungary is visiting the Prime Minister of Hunger." Now, if this friendship with foreign countries is to have any effect, any fruit, we should have by this time, got ourselves to work to give alleviation to the repatriates from Burma who have returned to India, more especially to South India. They have left their lakhs and lakhs worth of property, their business capital, even their goods with the Burmese Government, the Burmese Revolutionary Government, they call it. Our Heads of Government have gone to Burma more than once and they have returned and declared hopes and pious wishes, but nothing has happened till now. If the President means that friendship is only to be this, then I think the less said about it, the better. If we want purposeful friendship with foreign countries, we should have developed by this time comradial contacts with the emergent African States ; we should have created a sort of Commonwealth of South-East Asian nations ; we should have taken into our confidence Japanese industrialists and Japanese economists. What the Japanese are now proposing, the Asian Conference, should have been convened by India. But what the President possibly means by friendship, is the visit of foreign heads of State here and the possible visit of the head of this Government elsewhere. But that is not a sort of purposeful friendship.

As far as the President's Address is concerned, it is woeful that no mention has been made about the Emergency and the

DIR. This Government is still keeping the Emergency and the DIR. I am not asking them to lift the Emergency and the DIR, because I am apprehensive of any political consequences for this or that party. We can take it, we have taken it. Its continuation, even after the Tashkent Declaration will be misconstrued. There is no doubt about the fact that we have not taken it to our heart in the Tashkent spirit. Therefore, at least in the name of that great soul who has passed away, I would request and demand of this Government to repeal this Emergency and this DIR. They have got enough powers with the laws that they have, to deal with any mischief, with any anti-social element. Have we not seen the whole nation rising as one man forgetting all differences of opinion, giving up even agitations, when this country was confronted with danger? Why are they apprehensive of their own people? Why should they distrust the people of this land when they have demonstrated amply and nobly that they can stand up if this country is confronted with danger? This Government and those who are running this Government should not arrogate to themselves the monopoly of patriotism, and consider that others do not have patriotic instincts at all. Therefore I would demand of this Government that they should forthwith lift this Emergency and this DIR, and release those who are kept in jail for a long number of years. And unless and until they do that, they would not have a claim to decency and democracy. To the public the first and foremost and the one question that they will have to answer will be, "Why do you keep this Emergency and the DIR?"

Now, my friend, Professor Lal, has lessened the burden of my job by enumerating the various acts of omission and commission of this Government. Madam, the President's Address has to be taken as a sort of stock-taking. Specially so, because the present Government, and those who are running this Government, are very soon going to ask the country to give them a fresh mandate. Therefore, though the President has not stated it in so many words, even he, I think, has got his own misgivings. At one place he has stated that measures have to be taken to ensure equitable distribution of the available supply; which means that measures have not been taken. In another place he stated that the investment which we make in the public sector, has to give adequate return; which means it has not given adequate return. Therefore, even the President is not amply satisfied with the performance of this Government.

Nobody else is satisfied with the performance of this Government. When I say nobody, I do not exclude the Members of the ruling party. Curiously enough, Madam, there seem to be in the ruling party, two wings—the official wing and the non-official wing. While the official wing goes forward and onwards to defend every act of the Government, the unofficial wing competes with the Opposition Party Members, in pointing out the omissions and commissions. One Hon. Member who spoke before me was pleading for drinking water. It is a pathetic sight to see him plead for drinking water. After 18 years of independence, after having announced to the people that once they got Swarajya, there would be rivers of milk and honey, a member of the ruling Party stands up in this august House, and says, “Give us drinking water.” When that Hon. Member sat down, my friend, Professor Lal, stood up to ask for a fair deal for the labourers. I was angry with Professor Lal. “How dare you, a Member of the Opposition Party demand justice from the Government, when a Member of the ruling party is clamouring for drinking water ?” Therefore, an appraisal is very necessary.

Madam Deputy Chairman, when we started off as an independent nation, we had something like Rs 1,800 crores of foreign balances to our credit. After 18 years of independence, the present rulers have got to their credit an external debt of Rs 3,396 crores. When the national flag was unfurled from the Red Fort, we had Rs 1,800 crores of foreign balances, and when delegates went to the Brettonwoods Conference, the main problem for the delegates was what to do with this colossal sum, where to invest it, how to take it back, how to utilise it properly ? But the present Government has solved the problem. “No. We have no money outside, therefore, no problem at all.” We have debts of Rs 3,396 crores and it is for them to worry, not for us. It is the duty of the creditors to look after the moneys that have been advanced. The picture that has been presented after 18 years, is that our foreign balances have been almost completely wiped out. We owe to the world Rs 3,396 crores.

Even this rupee, Madam Deputy Chairman, has fallen so much, that economists are discussing between themselves whether it is 17 paise, 19 paise or 20 paise. Perhaps the Government will come forward boldly to say, “No, no. It is 22 paise.”

In 1948-49, Madam Deputy Chairman, the total tax revenue was Rs 695 crores, and we have progressed so much in 1965-66

that the total tax revenue is Rs 2,186 crores. In administrative expenses, we are competing with the most modern Government. In 1948-49, it was Rs 295 crores, and in 1963-64 we have reached up to the level of Rs 1,049 crores. Along with this expenditure on administration, along with the colossal sum collected by way of taxes from the public, along with the colossal sum of foreign debts in the three Plans, we have consumed something like Rs 14,973 crores. And what have we arrived at? After collecting taxes to the extent of Rs 2,000 crores, taking foreign loans rising up to Rs 4,000 crores, and having spent from the Plan funds nearly Rs 20,000 crores, what is the present position of this society husbanded by the present Government? Here is Mr Dhebar giving his opinion. I would be emboldened to pass strictures about the present state of affairs by quoting it. He has stated that over 60 per cent. of the heads of families cannot provide the basic necessities of life. I would ask Profesor Lal : can they claim socialism? It is better they give it up, so that at least the whole principle of socialism is not debased.

According to a recent survey, it is estimated that a man needs Rs 35 to be able to get nutritive food, but the lowest income is Rs 6.60, Rs 9.60, Rs 11.70 and Rs 13.23. After having consumed so much, after having consumed a colossal sum and the colossal time of 18 years, you have left this country and this people in this distress.

Taking again, agriculture, in the three Plans, this Government has spent a total on agriculture and irrigation of something like Rs 3,289 crores. Having spent so much and having created newer and newer dams and projects, from 1947 to 1965, they have been importing food from various countries, especially from America, of the value of Rs 2,634 crores. After having spent more than Rs 3,000 crores on agriculture and irrigation, they imported food worth Rs 2,634 crores.

The price level has risen from 1949, with 100 as the base, to 161 in 1965. Now I am going to ask this Government to present its credentials for continuing in power if this is the sort of picture they are able to present to the country. Yet the President is very rhetorical when he says "Our objectives are known and our goals are clear." Here, Madam, the tree is known by the fruit, not by the label that is attached to the tree. And if the President says that "Our objectives are known and our goals are clear", it is strange. If the objectives at least are not known, there could be an

excuse for this Government's acts of omission and commission. If they are still plodding to find out the goals for themselves, they can have some excuse for their acts of omission and commission. But they say, "Our objectives are known and our goals are clear." And our achievement is this. What would have been the achievements if you had no objective and if you were not aware of the goal, is something which a tragic dramatist should write on. Therefore, it is no use saying that our objectives are known and our goals are clear. My friend, Mr Dayabhai Patel, said the other day that the sooner they give up socialism, the better. He had said it in one context. I am saying it in another context. For him socialism is anathema. For me you are not the fit person to stand for socialism. That is why I say that the sooner you give it up, the better for socialism, and for this country. We find all-round frustration in this country. The labourers are frustrated. The farm hands are frustrated. The middle classes are frustrated. Certainly so are the Backward Classes frustrated. Professor Lal spoke about the Scheduled Castes ; certainly they too are frustrated. Now a committee is touring this country, and they have issued statements to the Press that in certain parts of our country, even to-day, the Scheduled Caste people cannot go unmolested on certain streets, in certain villages. Our Government servants are frustrated. Wherever a dearness allowance is announced, it is preceded by a price rise. There is a sort of race between the price rise and the dearness allowance, and they are frustrated. Our scientists are frustrated ; they would like to go back to the country where they have learnt. Our technicians are frustrated. They think that they are not being given their due place in the industrial sphere. And may I add, Madam Deputy Chairman, we non-Hindi people are frustrated. My friend who opened the motion, said that though he is a non-Hindi man, he would dare to speak in Hindi. That shows the mentality of non-Hindi people. Now for a non-Hindi man to speak in Hindi before an audience mostly composed of Hindi-knowing people, one should dare, because he knows that it is not his language. He knows it because, however proficient he might be in Hindi, Hindi-knowing people, people whose mother tongue is Hindi, can find fault with the style or structure.

M. B. LAL : No, we all appreciated it.

Professor Lal says he appreciated it. We always appreciate curios. Let me tell this House, Madam Deputy Chairman, and through you this Government, that the anti-Hindi agitations have not com-

pletely died down in Tamil Nad. Those who are engaged in the anti-Hindi agitation, especially students, when they found that this country was confronted by foreign aggression, suspended the agitation, not because they were satisfied with the policies and programmes of this Government. It was because they thought that they should give first priority to safeguarding the country. It is only recently that the anti-Hindi students' conference took place in Madras. Here they have stated very definitely, that they are not satisfied with the present language policy. Wherever this language issue arises, I find good advice given, friendly suggestions made and comradely consultations taking place. People ask me and men of my persuasion, they ask me, "Why don't you learn Hindi? Why should you be against any one language?" But I would point out to this House, Madam Deputy Chairman, through you, that the apprehension in the minds of the non-Hindi people, especially the people of Tamil Nad, are based on genuine facts. It is not a misapprehension; it is an apprehension strengthened by some of the hectic activities that are, from day to day, taking place in the Government of India. Therefore, there is no use saying that they are merely misapprehensions, that they were not real apprehensions. We apprehend that there is a move to create a sort of linguistic ascendancy or a linguistic hegemony, or a Hindi imperialism in this country. That is not going to take place in the South, if I may say so, Bengal too, is not going to allow any kind of linguistic imperialism to succeed in this country of ours. If what you mean by national integration is sincere and serious, please do not think that you can integrate the country only by language. Did you speak in Hindi to me asking me to support the Government of India against foreign aggression? No. Was it because I went through Hindi journals that I found out there was a real danger in the eastern and western sectors? Not at all. Loyalty to the country is composed of various kinds of loyalties and loyalty to our language is not less in intensity, less in sincerity, than other kinds of loyalty. In a democratic country, the democratic duty of any decent individual, is to create priorities in loyalties. No one loyalty can be a substitute for some other loyalty. That is why some people find fault with us and say that we are fighting over the question of language unnecessarily. Here I will have to point out, that even in advanced countries where there is democracy, this question of language engages the minds of the masses, and the classes. There is a classic example of the language tangle, in

Canada. Canada was created by immigrants from Europe. There are English-speaking Canadians and French-speaking Canadians, and the French-speaking Canadians are to be found in a particular locality in Canada, called the State of Quebec and they are in a minority. And the Canadian Government, because they wanted Canada to remain a sort of homogeneous unit, made it, through law, a bilingual State. They have accorded equal rights and equal status, to both the French and the English. Yet, in the working of this bilingual scheme, the English-speaking people got the utmost, they went to the topmost rung of the ladder. Now the French-speaking people of Quebec stood up to question it, to protest and even to revolt against this linguistic hegemony, this linguistic decandancy. Therefore please do not run into the line of thinking that there is something wrong in Tamil Nad, that they take up or rake up unnecessary issues. We Tamilians are very calm, because we are very determined. We never engage ourselves in flimsy issues, because we think we are capable of solving fundamental issues. Therefore, in Tamil Nad, the language issue is corroding political party affiliations. That is why we find today, not only students but also teachers, not only political parties but even the Bar Council, coming forward to question and protest against this language imperialism. It is high time the present Government at least announced in unambiguous terms its language policy.

Of course I am conscious of the fact that the present Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi came to Madras during the time of that hectic agitation. She has declared in one of her Press conferences, that after coming to Madras she has understood the necessity for rethinking. Now we do not know where that rethinking has led her. If she could think about rethinking while she was not the Prime Minister, it is more necessary now, when she is the custodian of the destinies of this country, to rethink, to react, to re-shape and re-construct, the shattered hopes and confidence of Tamil Nad. Therefore, I was very sorry that in the President's Address there was no mention about the language issue. Please do not think that because it is not mentioned, we are not conscious of it. Please do not think that because there are no agitations, the language issue has died down. When I say agitation, I do not mean violent agitation, because violence is an off-shoot. Nobody starts violent agitations. There is only one time for violent agitation and that is the last time in rebellion and revolt. But in any

agitation, when anti-social elements enter, then something about which even the sponsors of the agitation are ashamed, takes place. I would plead with this Government—we are frustrated, the non-Hindi people are frustrated about the policy and programme on language, of the present Government.

As I have stated, Madam Deputy Chairman, after having been in power for such a long time, if you are not able to erase the spirit of frustration, how can we have, as the President wants us to have, a spirit of cooperative endeavour? Possibly he means that there should be cooperation between all political parties, that there should be cooperation between the political parties and the non-political parties, that the nation as a whole, engage in a cooperative endeavour. I am all praise for that, Madam Deputy Chairman. But I would ask the Members of the ruling party to sincerely think over this question. Are they capable of giving sincere cooperation to other political parties? May I, Madam Deputy Chairman, give a concrete illustration? This House knows that we of the DMK control the Madras Corporation. For the last six years, we have been controlling the Madras Corporation, and yet we were not politically peevish enough to create any sort of political bickering. It was during the regime of the DMK in the Corporation of Madras, that we have put up a statue for the All-India Congress President, Shri Kamaraj and also a statue for the late lamented Shri Satyamurti, who adorned the other House many years ago. We have passed a resolution, I think the first of its kind in the whole of India, that the Corporation would shortly install a statue of the late lamented Lal Bahadur Shastri. Do you think this is political peevishness? No. But what is the ruling party doing there? In a distant town, Madam Deputy Chairman, in Tamil Nad, a bus-stand is opened and it is named after a DMK leader, unfortunately me. And the whole Congress machinery of Tamil Nad gets so inflamed, that injunction orders are obtained, the board there has been removed, the bill books that had been printed have been taken back, and the case is proceeding. And the President is asking us for a spirit of cooperative endeavour.

The late lamented Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, came to Madras on a triumphant tour, and he addressed a mass meeting at the Marina, Madras, The All-India Congress President, Mr Kamaraj was there. Please do not think that because I mention the President of the Congress, Kamaraj by name, I am inimical to him. I am one of his best friends. He was there on the dais.

Nobody grudges that. But if a spirit of cooperative endeavour is to be translated into action, is it not necessary for the Congress and for the Madras Government to invite the leader of the Opposition there who is a member of my party ? No, it was not done. And when the question was raised in the Madras Assembly, the Chief Minister said : " We have not invited Kamaraj specially, we sent various invitations and Mr Kamaraj came." Now in the hope of blackening us, Madam Deputy Chairman, the Chief Minister of Madras has brushed the fair name of the All-India Congress President with thick black tar. He said they were not special about it, that they sent various invitations and he came there.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : How much more time will you take ?

N. M. ANWAR (*Madras*) : Let him take full time.

P. N. SAPRU (*Uttar Pradesh*) : Yes, we want to hear him.

That is why I am doubtful about translating into action all this cooperative endeavour. If the cooperative endeavour is to be translated into action, then the mental make-up of the ruling party has to be reshaped. If they are prepared for that, we on this side are willing to cooperate with the ruling party in fighting against evils, if we are one in thinking what evil is to be fought against. We should be clear about the goal. You see, they say the goal is clear. The Members of the ruling party are very fond of saying " We are not ideological. We are going to be pragmatic." Madam Deputy Chairman, *pragmatism does not mean the dilution and debasement of ideology*. Pragmatism may be a way for obtaining your objective. But, pragmatism ought to be built upon ideology. And what is to be your ideology ? " Socialism. Don't you know that ? " That is what the Members of the ruling party say. Yes, yes, we know that your objective is socialism. But why is it so different from the socialism I understood from my professors, from Professor Lal ? They taught us that socialism is something wherein the profit motive would be curbed to the minimum and the service motive would be on the top. If the profit motive is kept down and the service motive is lifted up, even then you don't attain socialism to the fullest extent, but you are on the path to socialism. But here, what do we find ? They have got what they fondly call a mixed sort of economy. More than once I have stated in this House and outside, that it is not a mixed economy, but an adulterated economy. You are taking up the bad from capitalism and you are leaving out the good from socialism and you have got a curious mixture. That is what you have fashioned. After eighteen years

of untrammelled power, after having spent crores and crores of rupees, you are landing this country in this sorry plight where an Hon. Member gets up and says he wants drinking water. But our goal is clear and our objective is there. Only there are people demanding drinking water. There are people demanding houses. There are people demanding food. There are people demanding work and there are people demanding justice. We have not supplied any of these things. But our objectives are clear and the goal is there. Moses said long ago he would take the nation to the promised land. "Follow me my children, I will take you to the promised land," he said. The people followed, unflinchingly, unquestioningly, faithfully and loyally. But where have you led them? You have led them to the land wherein black appears red and red appears black, because the very vision is blurred.

You do not know how much you produce in this country. We do not know where the food produced goes. We do not even know the results of the Five-Year Plans. I am saying this on very good authority. Here is a stricture :

"Although it was now eleven years since the goal of socialism was accepted, it has not succeeded in lessening, let alone removing the disparity between the rich and poor. On one side we see an affluent class indulging in conspicuous spending ; on the other side, masses of people living in misery and squalor. We see production getting more and more oriented to luxury items instead of to the necessities for the common man."

This is where the Government has led the nation. This is a stricture coming not from an economist. If it comes from an economist, you can brush it aside and say that it is too theoretical, if it comes from anyone of us here, this House may say, "Oh, they are disgruntled and therefore they are saying all these things." But this comes from the President of the All-India Congress Committee, Mr Kamaraj.

ATUL BIHARI VAJPAEYEE : From the horse's mouth.

My Hon. friend, Mr Vajpayee, is supplying me with a phrase but I am not taking that. I would say it comes from the mouth which has been fed by the nation for more than thirty—forty years politically, I do not mean physically, and the President of the All-India Congress Committee, in one of his Jaipur Speeches has stated that, and yet you say that your objectives are known, your achievements are known. How can we be enthused by your objectives? If

there is to be a real objective and real goal, you should have taken us at least halfway. Have you done that? Here is another stricture :

“One of the main causes of inflation was concentration of wealth in the hands of a few.”

If Professor Lal were to say that, the Members of the Treasury Benches would retort by saying, “This is your reading.” But this is the reading not of the Members opposite.

“These few people, moneyed people, not only spend extravagantly but also develop a tendency to hoard. This has resulted in prices going up because money that was to be put to productive use, was utilised for destructive purposes.”

Madam Deputy Chairman, nearly thirty years ago, sitting in my classroom, my economics professor taught the very same thing. He said that inflation was caused when money generated was not given to productive purposes. This is stated after eleven years of professed socialism. When the Hon. Sri Gulzarilal Nanda stated this, because it was he who stated this, there was an interruption and another Hon. Member, Mr Malaviya put in a question, “Are we proceeding on the right lines?” What a question to ask, after 18 years — “Are we proceeding on the right lines?” And the answer is, Madam Deputy Chairman, still more curious, “If we proceed at the present pace, we shall not achieve anything.” The question is about the line and the answer is about the pace. I would like to know whether we are proceeding on the right lines. If it is on the right lines, I would not mind the pace. You can reach it in five years or fifteen years or twenty-five years, but I am more concerned with this : are we on the right lines? I am apprehensive of using the word ‘stricture’, but I have no other word. My stricture is, you are not on the right lines, because the Government or the party which controls this Government, is not a party welded together by ideology. We find Swatantrites there, we find Communists there, we find the PSP there, we find the SSP there. Unfortunately, I do not have anybody there. It is not a consolidated party, but a party so fluid that anything can flow into it and anything can get out of it. That is why, even after eighteen years, you have not taken this country towards the goal and you have not achieved the objective. You may be feeling happy about this fact that there is nothing wrong with the people, that they are docile. Even before the French Revolution, students of history

would know pretty well, just prior to the outbreak of the Revolution, everything was quite all right. There were palatial buildings in Paris, there were academies of literature in Paris, there were architectural monuments in Paris which people from London came to see and to copy, there were poets, ballet singers and ballerinas. Everything was rosy, till hot blood came gushing forth everywhere. This was because of a crack underneath, which you cannot see. You are dazzled by the dome and forget to find the crack underneath. That crack is, Madam Deputy Chairman, the grinding poverty of the masses, the unemployment that is growing into dangerous proportions and the frustration about which I have spoken a little earlier. And yet you point out the objective. The late lamented Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur, has stated, "To my mind, socialism in India must mean a better deal for the great mass of people who are engaged in agriculture, the workers in the various factories, the middle-classes who have suffered so much due to the rise in prices". You have left in the lurch, all these sectors of society. Yet the President says that the objective is clear, and the goal is there. Therefore, I would say that we should find out whether the goal is really there, whether the objective is really there. When I stated, Madam Deputy Chairman, that the Congress in my State is not adopting a cooperative spirit, there were interruptions and there are bound to be more interruptions on this. The present ruling party bases its strength upon electoral victory and that electoral victory is procured not by presenting a balance-sheet of achievements, but by presenting false promises and pious hopes. If anybody is infuriated by it, please do not think that I am the author of this stricture :

"Many goondas had the patronage of Ministers and political leaders. There are so many Walcotts in Delhi, whose photographs are published with those of Ministers and who take undue advantage of their influence on them. The police feel demoralised because of their relations with the high-ups. No doubt, goondas are patronised by political leaders who need them for elections to catch votes."

This is what was said about the Congress by the President of the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee, Mr Mushtaq Ahmad, just a couple of days ago. I would tremble in my shoes to say this, but I feel strengthened by the stricture from the Congress quarter, because I know of many illustrations in my State where vote-catching

is based on such things. Therefore, the objective is not clear, the goal is not clear, they are not on the right lines, their political power is itself based upon dubious claims and is maintained not by civilised or democratic ethics. Yet they have stated they have solved most of the problems, especially the food problem, because America has promised them enough food, enough and more food.

And when questions were raised from this side of the House whether it was not derogatory on the part of this mature nation, to take a begging bowl to every nook and corner of the world to get a morsel of food, up came the answer from the other side : if not, there would be starvation deaths. I for one, would consider starvation deaths more gruesome than the begging bowl, but may I not ask, am I not entitled to ask, why this begging bowl after 18 years of independence ? Why this begging bowl, after gigantic amounts have been given to you, after colossal amounts have been given to you and after you have completed three Plans ? Therefore, there is something wrong in your Plans. One Member from the other side said that there ought to be something wrong in the Plans. May I, Madam Deputy Chairman, point out, that, more than a defect in the Plan, the defect in implementation is greater and the defect in the mentality of those charged with implementation of the Plan, is more vicious. Therefore unless we get a change in the Government, unless we find a new team altogether to shoulder the responsibility of leading this country, we are not going to solve either the food problem or the industrial problem. And it is not I alone who have come to this conclusion. There are many others. Here is another noble soul. He says :

“It is very unfortunate that after three Five-Year Plans the country should import food from abroad. The least that ought to have been done in an agricultural country like India was to make her self-sufficient in food and then do anything else.”

And he goes on :

“I am reminded of the book, *Impeachment of Warren Hastings*, If this Government were to be impeached on these counts of food, education and defence ; let alone my fourth charge of ignoring the poor, where would it be ? Perhaps it may be said that the Government is elected by the people, it is being run with their consent, so the people themselves must be held responsible for what has transpired.

“The time has now come when you should become conscious of your role in a democracy. There is no sense in relying on Delhi

and sitting idle at home. In Delhi there flows not only the Jamuna, but also the rivers of wine and liquor. Friends from abroad, coming to Delhi, close their eyes in amazement and wonder whether they are in the Indian capital or in their own city of Paris or London."

Madam Deputy Chairman, this is a stricture passed by not one inimical to the ruling party but by Acharya Vinoba Bhave. He has asked where would you be if you are impeached on these counts ? I repeat that question, and this question will be repeated from every nook and corner, throughout the length and breadth of the country. You will have to answer this question, not of this political party or that political party, but of the frustrated masses. The frustrated masses are the most dangerous element in any political system.

Madam, I am reminded in conclusion of a poem which tallies to a certain extent with the present state of affairs of the ruling party. Here it is :

There was a duck once so long,
 He hadn't any notion
 How long it took to notify,
 The tail of his emotion.
 And so it happened, while his eyes
 Were filled with woe and sadness,
 His little tail went wagging on,
 Because of previous gladness.

You are living upon previous gladness. The President of the All-India Congress has warned that a new generation has come which cannot be fed by the harvest of gladness of the past generation. That is why I find that the President's Address, though it has not mentioned in so many words the failure of this Government, is the deadliest stricture on the activities of the Government. In that sense, Madam Deputy Chairman, I thank the President and welcome the Address.

2

Sovereignty and the State

SECESSION AND SOVEREIGNTY

December 1963

The Chinese Aggression in October 1962 created national consciousness and national solidarity in India of a kind unknown in the country's history. As would be seen elsewhere in these selections, a separatist party like the DMK went all out to support the country in her war efforts. Its leader made the clarion call : "...enter the name DMK in the roll call of honour for the integrity and safety of the country." Nevertheless, there was a section of opinion in the country which felt that it was necessary to take action to safeguard the country against any fissiparous tendencies raising their heads in the future. A National Integration Committee with Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer as Chairman was appointed to make recommendations on the steps to be taken to deal with the tendencies for separation. On the recommendations of this Committee, the Constitution (16th Amendment Bill, 1963) was tabled by the Minister for Law, Thiru A. K. Sen. Its avowed purpose was to amend Art. 19 of the Constitution in order to give Parliament the necessary powers to enact laws, to restrict certain rights guaranteed under that Article. Its real objective was to make any party pleading for secession, ineligible to contest the elections.

The Minister for Law said that it sought to meet the 'forces of disintegration' which threatened the solidarity, unity and sovereignty of the country. Anna sees the Bill as a subversive attempt to abridge fundamental rights. In the highest traditions of liberalism he stands up for the right to present his views to the people. The speech underlines the danger of suppressing genuine discontent by the force of Law. The Bill, he argues, was undemocratic even at the inception. Again, sovereignty does not reside entirely in one particular place in a federal structure. In a country like India where diversities and regional disparities are pronounced and the working of the Federal Structure has created frustration there is no harm in a demand for review and reappraisal of the Constitution.

He warns the other opposition parties of the dangers inherent in allowing the ruling party to restrain freedom of speech and expres-

sion and to abridge the fundamental rights. It is a passionate plea for democracy and freedom. Anna requests the Government " not to establish silence by coercion or force but to establish concord by talking the language of the heart ".

MADAM Deputy Chairman, it is perhaps a painful paradox that we are today discussing an amendment of the Constitution to give the Government a new legal weapon to put down not an antagonist but a protagonist of a cause and that too immediately after expressing our desire and willingness to meet the Chinese aggressor round a table for negotiation. I have been listening with more than extraordinary interest to the remarks made from both sides of the House. Let me, at the outset, as a sponsor of the idea which you seek now to put down by legal repression, give an analysis of the demand and its history, not, of course, to reiterate my point of view but just to dispel some of the misinterpretations that have been made of that demand. One Hon. Member was saying that the demand for Dravidistan was based on what Phizo demanded. The truth is far from it. Another Member has stated here that such fissiparous tendencies arose after the advent of independence. That is coming very near the truth but not the truth itself. The DMK is an offshoot of the DK. The DK has been in existence long before independence and while there were wranglings, problems and policies as to the future political set-up, the DK, in which I was at the time acting General Secretary, presented a political formula for the South. It is only a corollary to that that the DMK is enunciating. Therefore, this has nothing to do with the acts of commission or omission of the ruling party. It has nothing to do with similar or more ferocious demands in any other part of the country. I would request Members of this House, to at least analyse the problem before they pounce upon the problem itself.

Secondly, I want to point out that so soon after expressing our willingness to meet an aggressor should you not try, as members of this great nation, to understand us before you try to ban the very propaganda itself? Are we so debased that we should be treated as untouchables in the political arena? Is not our demand serious that you should try to convince us, convert the people?

Are we not amenable to reason ? Have you attempted that ? That is my humble submission to this House. Irrespective of party affiliations I am requesting every one of the Members of this House to bestow their serious thoughts to this aspect — whether we have been consulted, whether the ruling party has taken some trouble to analyse our problem. I am mentioning the word ‘ ruling party ’ because most of the opposition parties have tried to analyse it. This morning one Hon. Member was saying that the Communist Party was allied with us in this. To the honour of the Communist Party I may say that when we approached them asking them to accept our principle, they had the guts to say that they would not. But electoral alliances or electoral adjustments have got nothing to do with ideologies and therefore when we approached the Communist Party and other parties we were not acting in accordance with ideologies, but only with a view to getting political alliances. It may be of interest to this House to know that even now, this very day, the Madras Congress and the DMK in Madras have come to an agreement over the Mayoral election. Therefore political adjustment is one thing, electoral alliance is entirely another thing and ideology is different.

An electoral alliance does not mean the surrendering of one’s ideology. The Madras Congress is strong enough to uphold its ideology and the Chief Minister of Madras is very strong in his conviction about the Congress ideology. I do not want the Chief Minister of Madras or the Madras Congress to be misconstrued in our debates. I am saying this just to point out that there can be electoral alliances without surrendering one’s ideology. But I am pleading for an understanding of the ideology ; I am pleading for an analysis.

Now, this Bill is brought forward to safeguard and maintain the sovereignty and integrity of India. What the danger is to that sovereignty I do not know, and I have not been told. Perhaps the Law Minister — I am sure that he is engaged in drafting a new law and that is why he is not to be found in the House — if he were here, would turn round and say : “ Know you not that there are fissiparous tendencies in this country ? Know you not that we have constituted a National Integration Committee for this very purpose ? Know you not that we are acting in strict accordance with the suggestions of the National Integration Committee ? ” I am perfectly aware of the constitution, Madam Deputy Chairman, of the National Integration Committee under the able leadership

of Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, a sturdy champion of India's sovereignty and integrity, so sturdy indeed that as Dewan of Travancore he announced the independence of Travancore and proclaimed a pact with Pakistan. Today fortunately for the Congress he is a non-aligned power and you have taken him as the Chairman of the Committee. Let me request Members of this House to analyse how this Committee functions. It was charged with a mission to find out how best to attain national integration, not merely to put down propaganda for secession. It was given the mission to find out how best to forge national integration. What are its constructive suggestions? What are its constructive proposals barring the penal provision that they want to get from out of the National Integration Committee's deliberations? The National Integration Committee, Madam Deputy Chairman, toured all over India and had the courtesy of course to go to our State. It interviewed men of various political persuasions but were not able to meet members of the DMK because by that time the State Government of Madras had assigned to us apartments in the Vellore Central Jail. That is the reason advanced by the National Integration Committee for not meeting us but at that time, if the National Integration Committee was interested in knowing our point of view, if they wanted to have contact with us, the Organising Secretary of the party, Mr N. V. Natarajan was outside the jail; Mr Manoharan, M.P. was outside; Mr Raja Ram was outside. They could have got hold of any one of these people. I do not mean that Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar should come to the jail to meet us. He has had experience of putting others in jail and not going to jail himself. So I do not expect him to come all the way to jail to meet us. We are very small men. I do not want such a show of generosity from a Committee manned by such stalwarts, but they could have taken the trouble to get into contact with some people who were outside. Did they take that trouble? I would request every member of this House to forget for a moment the fierceness of our demand. Forget for a moment the dangerous consequences but please answer me. I need no words; a slight smile, a happy twinkle, a friendly nod is enough. Is it not common courtesy and democratic decency that the Committee should have got into contact with the members of our party? No; they did not do that. But they have given a statement and in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the present Bill it is said that they are strictly following what the National Integration

Committee has suggested. Therefore the genesis of the Bill is most undemocratic. It is to bring home that point of view that I have taken this trouble of taxing your patience.

Now, I will come to another point. The demand for Dravidastan has been erroneously said to be dangerous and many of the leading lights of the ruling party have been saying even months ago or weeks ago that they do not understand what we demand. They do not understand and yet they understand that it is a potential danger. How it is rational or logical or even political, I do not understand. It was in this House or in the other House — I do not exactly remember — that the Home Minister was saying some months ago that all propaganda for secession will be put down when it goes out of bounds, when its dimension grows to a certain extent. Nobody sought any clarification because it was thought that any propaganda for secession will be put down if it leads to any overt act, if it leads to crossing the bounds of legality. That was stated by the Home Minister some months ago. What has happened in the intervening period? Have we become skull-hunters or head-hunters? Did we indulge in any extra-legal activities? No. On the other hand, as soon as the Chinese aggression took place we offered our unstinted and spontaneous cooperation to the war effort. I am very glad now that the Law Minister is not here, because when the very same point was mentioned by the leader of our group in the other House the Law Minister stood up, not with a smile but with a stern face and waving his hands majestically stated that it was all due to the Defence of India Act. The Law Minister is entitled to uphold the potency of law especially when he is the parent of it but in his anxiety to uphold the potency of law he has banished from his mind common courtesy. I do not expect the Law Minister to give any commendation to the DMK. We have the people's approbation in plenty and it cannot be strengthened by any commendation from the Law Minister. I may mention here another fact. In his anxiety to uphold the potency of law, he has minimised one other salient fact. The present unity of purpose, the national upsurge is entirely due to the ability and nobility of thought of the Prime Minister of India. That is more potent than laws. Laws are after all corrective and preventive. The law says, do not do this, do not do that. That is not as effective as the mighty influence that the Prime Minister exerts over the minds of millions irrespective of party affiliations. In his anxiety to uphold the law, I do not know why

the Law Minister should minimise the influence that the Prime Minister exerts. He could have at least stated that the cooperative spirit today to be found in this country is due to the magnetic personality and the democratic liberalism of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I do not know what happens inside the Cabinet. If the Law Minister's statement were read by an outsider, what impression would that create? That everyone will become so anti-national, anti-patriotic, that there will be trouble. I would request the Law Minister to have a sense of proportion when he makes assertions. Apart from that, the Defence of India Act is not and cannot be the conscience-keeper of the nation. It can only be the jail-keeper of the nation. Therefore, if the DMK has come forward to offer its unstinted support to the war effort, I do not expect a good conduct certificate from the Government for that. I do not want reciprocity. I am pointing this out to ask if you do not find a natural instinct, a spontaneous upsurge coming up in our minds. Should you not allow this instinct to have a natural growth? And is this measure a sort of manure? It is a damper and an irritant. Why not allow this natural instinct and this spontaneous upsurge to have its full shape, to have its full blossom, to have its full force? What is the urgency behind this measure? Why are you so hasty? That is the point. And to bring home that point I was pointing out our support to the war effort. As I said, we are very small men, but we happen to represent 3.4 million voters in our country as against the five million voters who made the Congress the ruling Party in Madras. I hope I need not argue very much about the difference between five and three. I assure this House that if you do not put dampers on our progress, I assure this House that if you do not bring in legal repressions, we are the next ruling Party in Madras. And the Central Cabinet Minister, the Hon. C. Subramaniam, issued almost an invitation in his Coimbatore speech. He said: "Give up separation, I would welcome you to form a Ministry." It is to such a Party that you are denying the common courtesy, the democratic decency, by not giving us an opportunity to place our point of view before the National Integration Committee or even taking us into confidence.

The leader of the Communist Party, my esteemed friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta, has been kind enough to put forward a suggestion. He said: Why don't all the democratic forces and the nationalist forces unite together to counteract them? I welcome

that. I would like to see whether the people accept my point of view or your point of view. Why should you run away from that chivalrous contest? I would even request Mr Bhupesh Gupta to consider whether it is not more politic to consider converting us before counteracting.

BHUPESH GUPTA : That is what I said. I will try. I am very thankful to Mr Bhupesh Gupta. Either his method of converting us is not effective or it has not been as intense as he desires. But I would request this House to suggest to the Government that a Consultative Committee be formed with members of all political parties to come and have discussions. Correct us if we are erroneous. Convince us if you have got solid facts. Convert us to your point of view. Instead of that you are compelling us. Compulsion, especially through law—I need not say it in a House where there are so many luminaries in the legal profession—is the worst form of argument. When there are two ideas contesting in the competitive market of public opinion, if you debar one idea with legal force you are shirking that contest. And what was the statement being issued by members of the Congress Party in our State right up to the Tiruchengode by-election? They were saying this and it was repeated in this House also. One Member, my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, stated that I am a solitary single figure. Another Member stated that we have no hold in Kerala, in Karnataka, in Andhra. I do not claim to have converted or even to have got hold of an appreciable dimension of support in those sister States. I never claimed that. My only point is that when I am making this point it would be felt by those territories, by those linguistic States. I never claimed that what I think is being thought at Waltair or Hyderabad or at Mysore or in Trivandrum. I never said that. As a matter of fact, I have not gone to these places. I have not addressed any meeting in Hyderabad. I have not gone to Mysore to speak. And why don't you allow me to go there, why don't you come along with me? I would even make a sporting offer. Let there be a Consultative Committee of all the parties and let us all tour the country to find out what the country needs. Convince me and then say that my demand is unthinkable. But do not bring in this measure and then say what are you going to do with this measure? My friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta was saying that we may go underground. Now, we always remain on the ground. We propose not to go underground. But surely the sullen discontent will go underground.

BHUPESH GUPTA : That is what I said.

The sullen discontent will go underground, and that cannot be countenanced by any measure. Political philosophy has not yet formulated a measure to fight out hidden discontent in the minds of millions. And, therefore, by this measure you are driving discontent, sullen discontent, sincere discontent, underground.

There is another point that I want to make. Why do you think that our demand endangers sovereignty ? Before answering that we should be very clear about what we mean by sovereignty. The Preamble to the Constitution says that the political sovereignty rests with the people. Then legal sovereignty is divided between the Federal Union and the constituent units. Why don't you take it that our scheme is to make the States still more effective sovereign units ? Why don't you take it in that light ? Why do you think that the moment we demand Dravidastan, we are cutting at the root of sovereignty ? Sovereignty does not reside entirely in one particular place. We have a federal structure. That is why the framers of the Constitution wanted a federal structure and not a unitary structure, because as many political philosophers have pointed out, India is so vast — in fact it has been described as a sub-continent — the mental health is so varied, the traditions so different, the history so varied, that there cannot be a steel frame unitary structure here. My complaint is — and it has been endorsed by the PSP Member Mr Gurupada Swamy and others — that the working of the federal structure all these thirteen years has created a sense of frustration in the minds of the States. They feel they may not side with me, that the States are fast becoming dole-getting corporations. They feel that they are relegated to the background, and there is the very natural instinct in them that they should be given more power. When coupled with that there is the regional disparity and added to that is the linguistic tangle. Do you not think, that it is very natural for men like us to feel disillusioned, and that it is not very unnatural that we should think of separation ? Well, come to us half-way and say we go so far and no further. But when you say that, when you meet us halfway, give us proper answers to the puzzles that are created not by us but by the working of the Constitution to the detriment of the States. Did not the West Bengal Government and the Union Government have to go before the Supreme Court on the issue of the coal mines ? The Law Minister happens to come from West Bengal. Are the Bengalis fully satisfied ?

Constitutionalists as they are, they have to abide by the Supreme Court decision, and if my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, were not of Communist persuasion, he would perhaps be the first to champion the cause of West Bengal. I bow my head to the national instinct of the Bengalis.

BHUPESH GUPTA : I did champion it here. Dr B. C. Roy knew it.

I am very sorry you have lost the battle. What I want to say is that the working of the federal structure is in such a way that the States are feeling more and more frustrated, and their demand is to make the Union Government think that there should be a review of the Constitution, a reappraisal of the Constitution. And in that I am supported by a very presentable personality, a personality who can, when he wants, get out and get into the Cabinet. I am referring to the Hon. Mr T. T. Krishnamachari, Minister of Economic and Defence Co-ordination. On September 8, 1962, delivering an address in one of the institutions in New Delhi in memory of a great soul, the late lamented Feroze Gandhi, he has stated that as framers of the Constitution they have failed to incorporate a provision for a decennial review of the Constitution. Not only that, he said that public opinion should assert itself for that. Well, why do you take me as a Naga ? Take me as a guardian of public opinion and come along with me to the States and find out the opinion of the people in the States. Well, I do not think that I want to place any difficulty or trouble in the way of any member of the ruling party, but without mentioning names I may say that many of the members of the ruling party in Madras may swear by the sovereignty and integrity of India, but whenever they find one of their proposals brushed aside, whenever they find one of their projects not taken up, whenever they find that they are not allotted the amount they need, they think about me. (*Interruption.*) That is why Annadurai is demanding support. Deny me a steel plant in Salem, I rise up there. Deny Tuticorin its development, the DMK comes in. Therefore, you should take the DMK as the spearhead of the opposition to the unitary nature of the federal structure of this Constitution. As elder Members of Parliament, why should you take this into the jungle ? Lift it up to the highest political arena and allow it free play ; make the Federation become a real Federation.

Then some of the Members may turn around and tell me, "You are talking about separation." Mr Bhupesh Gupta was

saying that it was unthinkable. Even if others are not aware of it, Mr Bhupesh Gupta should be aware of the Soviet Constitution. It allows the prerogative of separation and yet they are not raising a hue and cry that their sovereignty is in danger. (*Interruption.*) Mr Bhupesh Gupta seems to take the bad out of the Soviet Union and not the good out of it. I would request him and persuade him to see that the very mention of separation is not a danger to sovereignty. Not only that, even granting that our propaganda for separation endangers sovereignty, what should a democratic party that controls the Government try to do? Should it not go to the people? Does not our Preamble say that sovereignty rests with the people? It is the people who have created the Constitution. It is to them, the repositories of our political rights, that you should appeal. I go to the people with confidence. I would request members of the ruling party to assure your Government about your capacity, about your ability to counteract me by educating the public. Why do you give up your rights? You as members of the ruling Party and as responsible public men should suggest to the Government, "Do not intervene between us and the public. If Annadurai carries on a propaganda for separation, we are alive to that danger. We shall meet the people and make the people understand the venomousness of the propaganda." May I request Members of this House to give an amount of respect to the common man as a democrat? Do not think that the common man can be deluded by anybody. He may not be well versed especially in law but he has got a sound and robust commonsense. He knows how to distinguish between cheese and chalk, and when you bring in this measure, you are passing a vote of no-confidence against the commonsense of the entire nation. Why not leave the issue to the people? Let them decide. Do not think that I along with a handful of people in the party can delude the people or mislead them. The Law Minister in the other House gave an argument which I can only say would please teenagers.

So long as sovereignty rests with the people, they should be the proper authority to decide upon issues. Since the federal structure has been to a certain extent debased and taken into the unitary structure, the demand for separation can be viewed in consonance with the discontent of the other States. I was pressing that point that even granting that our propaganda was dangerous, the members of the ruling party should try to counteract us. And even granting that they are relinquishing their right, I would

request the Members of the House to consider whether, to counteract that propaganda, curtailment of the fundamental rights is necessary. I would ask the House to consider that point. Of course, I am conscious and perfectly aware that fundamental rights are not absolute and that there are limitations.

Parliament has got every right to restrict them. These are the elementary principles. One need not take much trouble to understand them. But some trouble should be taken to understand that the emphasis should be on the rights and not on the limitations and that is why in our Constitution it is stated in very clear terms, that the restrictions ought to be reasonable. My honest submission is that the restrictions are not reasonable, not reasonable in the sense that firstly, you have not analysed the problem ; secondly, you have not tried to understand us ; thirdly, you have not given us alternatives and fourthly, you have not taken the people into your confidence. It may not be in the legal sense, but in the political sense the restrictions that you have placed are not reasonable.

And coming to the fundamental rights, I was saying that the Law Minister was giving a very funny argument in the other House. He said that if fundamental rights were to be allowed to have their full sway, some people might use those fundamental rights to invite the Chinese themselves. What I want to point out is, why should the Law Minister or, for that matter, any Member discount the ability of the public to judge things for themselves ? Would the public countenance anybody getting on the platform and saying, " We welcome the Chinese ? " No. Our people may not be well-versed in the sections and in the chapters of the Constitution but they know how to differentiate between good and evil. And that is why in spite of so much enslavement by a powerful imperial power, the people were ready to come forward when there was a call for fighting for freedom. Don't minimise your abiding faith and confidence in the public.

And as regards the fundamental rights, the argument presented by the Law Minister in the other House, as I have said, is far removed from not only truth but also from all seriousness. But, as I said, limitations can be placed and Parliament is empowered to place limitations. But all these limitations should be in consonance with the extraordinary circumstances warranting such limitations. I argue, I submit that there have not been any extraordinary circumstances warranting such a limitation. In fact, in the Motilal Nehru Committee, I think in the year 1928 Pandit Jawaharlal

Nehru has stated very clearly that we should not only get our fundamental rights but guarantee to the people that those rights will not be withdrawn under any circumstances. Note these words, Madam Deputy Chairman, and through you, I would request Members of this House also to mark all these words : " under any circumstances ", we may have grown weaker since. I can understand it. But has an extraordinary circumstance arisen to warrant these restrictions ? No ; and arguments have been put forward that circumstances may arise, that the DMK might not have crossed the legal bounds but yet the tendency to create mischief is there, the tendency to create danger is there and we should put down with an iron hand even that tendency. I do not think that I have time enough to talk about the place of the phrase ' tendency ' in the legal field and jurisprudence known to the legal hierarchy. But I would say this that one of our best legal luminaries, Mr Justice Patanjali Sastry, has stated that it is better to allow certain noxious branches to have a luxurious growth rather than to attempt to cut off and sap the vitality of the plant. That is one of the judicial pronouncements about fundamental rights and its limitations. And in America there are many Supreme Court judgments. Of course, we are not bound by them but they point to the liberality of thought that can be found in democratic countries. At one time, in one of the States, New York I think, when a new law was brought in that those who wanted to become teachers should take an oath there that they would be loyal to the Constitution and that they would be loyal to the political institutions, the Governor of New York stated that such an abridgment of the fundamental rights was unnecessary and vetoed it. I think that we should follow or at least try to shape our thoughts according to the liberal traditions built up in other democratic countries. If, instead of that, you say, " Well, we have the power to annihilate, annihilate any opposition party, today the DMK, tomorrow the Communist Party, the day after the Jana Sangh," you have got that power, well carry on. But remember where any government depending for its solidarity and supremacy only on legal repression went. And what the result would be, I need not remind you. Even today, we found on this side of the House, Mr Bhupesh Gupta wanted not only the DMK to be countered but the Jana Sangh to be counteracted because to him the Jana Sangh is a communal party. And the PSP has stated that the Communist Party is more dangerous than the DMK, so we come in handy.

If you allow the ruling party to get into the temptation to restrain or restrict freedom of speech and expression, it may be aimed at the DMK today, but what guarantee is there that it may not be aimed at other parties tomorrow ? For that the ruling party need not argue. We argue ourselves. The PSP argues for restricting the Communists ; the Communists argue for restricting the Jana Sangh. The more the merrier for the ruling party. Therefore I would request Members of this House to look at this problem as a problem of restriction of Fundamental Rights. Let the members of the ruling party at least say that they can stoutly oppose us in our propaganda ; let them come forward at least to convince me and on that ground, if they can, let them oppose this Bill in toto. Because my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, has said that he is accepting it in principle. Another friend of mine, Mr Gurupada Swamy, has said that he is accepting it as an overall objective, which means that they realise the consequences of such restrictions. I would request them to take into consideration the consequences of such a law rather than the party at which it is aimed. It has been stated, Madam Deputy Chairman, that freedom of expression and thought should not be restricted in a democratic society if members of the ruling party are confident not only about themselves but about the people.

“ One of the most important purposes of society and government is the discovery and spread of truth on subjects of vital concern. This is possible only through absolutely unlimited discussion . . . ” As Bagehot points out, “ ...once force is thrown into the argument, it becomes a matter of chance whether it is thrown on the false side or the true, and truth loses all natural advantages in the contest.” I would request the Government not to establish silence by coercion or force but to establish concord by talking in the language of the heart. I therefore appeal to the members of the ruling party to stand by the fundamental rights, and to maintain your right to educate the public, instead of bringing in a legislation which is in the nature of a penal provision to put down all thought and all expression of dissent or difference.

My point, Madam Deputy Chairman, is this : I appeal to the members of the ruling party to suggest to their Government that a measure of this sort is unnecessary, is undemocratic, and it cuts at the very roots of fundamental rights. I am not referring to the Fundamental Rights in the Constitution but to the fundamental rights of Congressmen. They are not made a party to this issue.

They are asked to stand aside. The measure says, "Annadurai should be counteracted. You have failed in that. Let me come in." This is a sort of passing a vote of no-confidence against the ability and capacity of the Congressmen of Madras, for whom I have the greatest respect. You seem to minimise their importance. That is my trouble. You seem to feel that they are incapable of counteracting this. This is the tragic situation, and therefore it is that I would request the members of the ruling party to suggest to the Government, "Here we are, stalwarts, to fight any fissiparous tendencies. Leave us to look after Annadurai, such a small, puny figure. A mere look, an emphatic word, is enough to scotch that fellow." Say that to your party, to your Government, and withdraw this Bill because it means not only now but for all time to come, it will be said that a situation arose in India wherein the Government of India had to bring forward an amendment to the Constitution to counteract a small group or, to borrow a phrase from my friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta, to counteract a single solitary man. I would say this, that the Bill is aimed at not only the DMK but at others also. My point is, I am concerned with the Party to which I belong.

If there are other representatives who may be talking equally in this way or if there are representatives of this ideal who have submerged that ideal for their selfish ends, I am not concerned with them. My point is to present the point of view of the DMK ; it may be aimed at others also. But if you look at the dailies, weeklies and if you go to hear speeches from political platforms, they will be pointing out only the despicable DMK, not others.

Finally, I would appeal to the sponsor of this motion to drop it in the name of democracy, in the name of political decency, in the name of having abiding faith in the ability of the people to eschew evil. And if he is not able to free himself from the temptation completely, let me at least request him to defer consideration of this measure till the period of stresses and strains is over ; controversies should be kept in the background. And if the sponsor of the measure is not able to comply even with that request, Madam Deputy Chairman, please allow me to register my protest against the ruling party's methods, moves and measures.

AN APPEAL TO CONSCIENCE

May 1963

The Constitution (16th Amendment Bill) had been passed by a massive majority in the Lok Sabha. In the Rajya Sabha Anna was the solitary figure pleading for justice and fair play. Alone but undaunted he stands up to reiterate his point to explain the intense and growing frustration among the section of the people in his part of the country about the political set-up under the federation.

The Chinese invasion and its aftermath had considerably changed Anna's views and the desirability of an independent 'Dravida Nadu'. In the speech he made while the Constitution Amendment Bill was introduced as well as in this speech he argues for the need to keep intact the right of any unit to ask for separation. But accent in these speeches is for getting more sovereignty to the States and removing the regional disparities. He was convinced that unless the DMK contested and won the Elections, the rights and aspirations of the non-Hindi speaking people, especially of the South, could not be realised.

MR. VICE-CHAIRMAN, I do not have much to add to what I have already expressed on a previous occasion when this Bill was brought forward, but I would like to remove certain misapprehensions that have been created. The mover of the Bill has stated that in the other House it was passed unanimously. May be after the amendment, after the voting on the amendments, at the final stage my Party was not present. But when the first vote was taken, seven members of the DMK and one member of RSP Kerala — eight members — voted against the Bill. Perhaps in his anxiety

to stress the point that there ought to be unanimity on this, he took it for granted that there was unanimity. Fortunately or unfortunately, there was no such unanimity. Eight people have actually voted against the measure in the Lok Sabha.

Let us not look at this problem merely as a law and order problem, but as a problem, as my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta has put it, which ought to be solved in the political sphere. May I, with your permission, put to myself one question : what do I gain by standing alone in this House expressing an unpalatable thing, knowing full well that if only I were to give up that unpalatable thing, you would, everyone of you, take me into your hearts ? What do I gain by standing aloof and alone ? You should understand the psychology behind that stand. Please do not think that I am pressing for it, for the mere novelty of it. There is frustration, a very intense and a very growing one, among a section of people of my part who definitely feel that the present political set-up, the federation, is not going to deliver the goods. And that is why after having had the experience of this federation for so many years, not only the members of the DMK but members outside the DMK too, feel that unless something radical is done, unless some new kind of political set-up is created, this federation is not going to stand the strain and stress of the times.

Of course, the Minister was kind enough to state that even without this amendment, the Constitution is very clear, that the talk about separation is repugnant to the Constitution. I may point out that jurists are divided on that point, and I quote the opinion of one jurist of this august House, I am quoting Mr P. N. Saprú. He has written a very persuasive, a very lucid article, not for separation, but against separation in one of our English dailies, wherein he has said about the Preamble to our Constitution, that it is a Sovereign Republic. Since our Constitution is not rigid, since amendments are allowed, since our Constitution is purposely made flexible, even an amendment to the Preamble can be brought forward. And therefore it does not matter much whether, as the Minister has stated, the talk about separation is repugnant to the Constitution or, as the jurist has pointed out, it is open to question.

Apart from the Constitution, it is a matter of conscience. You should think — everyone of you in this House should think — why a particular section in this country feel a way diametrically opposed to what everybody else feels. We could not have been

peculiarly brought up. We could not have been unaware of the good influence that was being inculcated in this country for the past forty or fifty years. We heard Mahatma Gandhi talk about the great Bharat. We have heard with a thrill, as most of you have heard, about the oneness of this country. We have read about the oneness of this country. Yet, do some of us feel that the present political set-up of a federation makes the State become almost like a colony. Why do we feel that way? There is again the other item referred to by my friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta — regional disparity. You cannot ignore the existing regional disparity in the economic sphere. There is the psychological sphere which has been referred to, and there is the linguistic wrangle. Add up all these things, and you will come to the only conclusion to which some of us — rather most of our people — have come to, in our part of the country. We feel that if we remain a part and parcel of the Indian Union, if we remain as a component part of the Indian federation, linguistically there would be an imperialism, economically our State would be backward and psychologically we would not have so much of solace as we would have if we were to be separate. That is the background we would request everyone of the Members of this House to ponder over.

It was strengthened by the liberal dicta propounded by the present Prime Minister of India, while he was not the Prime Minister, but the leader of the liberation movement in the subcontinent. He has stated on many occasions that his party, the Congress Party, would try to ask or try to persuade every component unit of India to remain in the Indian Union but if for some reason or other a particular section of the people thought that that particular area should secede from the Union, he would not force them to remain in the Union but would give them the right to secede. I am quoting his famous speech at the Kapurthala Ground. I am also quoting his writings about the problem of separation. At that time the problem of separation was about Pakistan and not about other things. Therefore, when we read the liberal dicta of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, we were strengthened in our thought that if we were to present our case sincerely, you would consider it. But instead of meeting the DMK and its propaganda on the political ground, you are bent upon bringing forward a legislation. "The Congress position was that India should remain a national union but if at the same time the population of a unit specifically declares that they would not be in the common unit, then the Congress

should not ask them to stay in the Union. Thus the Congress recognises the right of separation or self-determination." This is what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has stated on 29th August, 1945. I have other quotations too but I do not want to take up the time of the House. Therefore, it is not that we are bringing forward a theory or a thesis which is very repugnant to everybody. At one time, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru thought that it would not be so. Mr Sapru has himself said that. He has asked the DMK and particularly me — I am glad that he has requested me — to give this up and he has said that merely because there is a federation, that does not mean that for all time to come a component unit of the federation cannot break away from it. Please study the history of federation, all over, present and past. Wherever any component part of a federation feels frustrated, feels that it can get much by remaining out rather than by remaining in, then that federation is bound to break up. It may not interest you, but it does interest me to know, to remind myself, that the Scandinavian Union — the Union between Norway and Sweden — was in vogue for four centuries, for four hundred years. Nobody questioned the validity, the legality or the logicity of it. But yet, a part of it thought that by remaining in the Union they would not be getting what they would get if they remained separate. And after four hundred years, that Union was broken. I have pointed this out not in a menacing spirit but as a student of history. Please do not trot out arguments by saying that our federation is indissoluble and therefore we cannot separate. Give us more cogent reasons, give us more assurances.

By amending Article 19, the Minister has stated, the freedom of speech is curtailed so as to safeguard the sovereignty and integrity of India. But our Constitution refers to fundamental rights and any restriction on the fundamental rights should be a reasonable one. The reasonableness or otherwise is not to be decided merely by the majority in a Parliament but by the judicial mind. They should sit and say whether this restriction is reasonable and even granting for argument's sake that the restriction is reasonable, we should be informed whether the restriction implies prohibition also. You can restrict a particular right ; say, go thus far and no farther. That was what the Home Minister stated in this House some months ago when an Hon. Member put him a question about the propaganda for separation. He said, if they go beyond a certain point, we will think about it. Now, that is

a most wholesome principle of fundamental rights, of freedom of speech. But this is total prohibition ; this is no restriction, telling the people not to preach violence, not to preach sabotage, not to preach a no-tax campaign. A mere talk about separation is not merely restricted but completely prohibited. The Hon. Minister who moved this Bill was very eloquent when he said that the two cardinal principles in our Constitution were sovereignty and democracy. This is not sovereignty ; nor is it democracy. Sovereignty does not mean power to be concentrated in one place and one place alone. The very term 'sovereignty', the definition of sovereignty is undergoing vast changes due to the impact of various political forces in this country, and outside this country. The United Nations Assembly is very busy defining what is meant by the term 'self-determination'. I understand a committee is in the process of finding out what exactly is meant by the term 'self-determination'. Therefore, let us not think that sovereignty has been explained in all its implications, and let us not also think that by bringing forward a measure, we can put down any thought or any talk or any discontent in any part of the country by anybody.

If such a law is brought forward and is passed, what is the situation ? Though my friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta supported it generally, and in principle, he has also asked the Congress Party, the ruling party, to fight us on political ground — I do not even want to use an offensive word such as 'fight' — *meet* us on the political ground. Why do you fight shy of meeting us ? Did the National Integration Committee care to enquire about our point of view ? Did the persuasive Home Minister create a machinery whereby he can get an insight into our sentiments, our feelings ? Simply because you have got a majority, simply because the DMK is in a minority, it is very easy for you to pass a legislation, and it is easier for me to go back to my people and say, "Well, I fought for you singly and all alone, and yet the Bill was passed. What shall I do ?" And my people, naturally, will say, "All right ; let us resist it." Therefore, you are creating an atmosphere of lawlessness, the breaking of laws. That is why, whenever a new legislation is contemplated, you should think — to borrow a phrase from my friend, the Home Minister — you should think a hundred times before you bring in any new legislation, see whether there is any necessity for it, whether there is any urgency for it, whether there is any cogency in it. Here there is neither urgency nor necessity nor cogency. I oppose this Bill, and in opposing this Bill I am

really sorry that I have run counter to the various sentiments of every one of the Members of the House, for whom I have the greatest respect. I would request everyone of them to ponder over the problem carefully, considerately and in a compromising spirit. I can even go so far as to tell the Home Minister, "All right, pass this legislation, but it will only remain in your archives or in your armoury. The people know how to meet the situation." Instead of that, after this Bill is passed, I would still request the Home Minister to constitute a parliamentary committee. Let it not be an official committee. Let it be a non-official committee composed of Members of different political parties. Ask Mr Sapru to be there; ask Mr Bhupesh Gupta to be there. I would very much like my friend, Mr Vajpayee, to be there. Let them tour our part of the country, stay there for a fortnight, meet all people, understand the cross-currents of political thought there, and then let them submit a report. I accept such a committee and I say that we would present materials enough for them to ponder over this problem and when they go through those materials, they will come to me and say, "Well, if these are the things, it is not unjustifiable for you to ask for separation, and yet we would very much like you to be with us. Now there is a German saying, "If you would not be my brother, I would break your head and make you one." Please do not break heads if you want concord, if you want a calm political atmosphere and if you want to solve political problems on the political plane.

Thank you.

CALL MY STATE 'TAMIL NADU'

May 1963

Tamil Nadu was once named after its capital city, Madras. The situation was a complicated one. Even Congressmen spoke of Tamil Nadu within the State, reserving 'Madras State' for letters and speeches meant for external consumption. To appease the Tamil People, they even changed the name of the Aranmore Palace in Ooty to 'Tamizhagam'. But they were not willing to set right this anomaly by making a Constitution Amendment.

It was Thiru Bhupesh Gupta, of the Communist Party who took the initiative in 1961 by introducing a private Members' Bill to amend the First Schedule, entry number 7 of the Constitution. The purpose of the Bill was to call the Madras State by its rightful name 'Tamil Nadu' in conformity with the historical, linguistic and cultural considerations. Anna's impassioned defence of this Bill will long be remembered for its sincere emotion and clear-cut reasoning.

The adamant Centre refused to yield and opposed the private Member's Motion to call 'Madras State' by its rightful name 'Tamil Nadu'. With its majority, the Congress Party defeated the Bill; but the change could not be resisted for long. Four years later in 1967, when the DMK was elected to power in Madras State, Anna as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu achieved his objective with the unanimous backing of both the Houses of the State Legislature. Today, there is no Madras State, only 'Tamil Nadu'.

MR VICE-CHAIRMAN, I am rarely in full agreement with my Hon. friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, but today I rise to support him wholeheartedly, fully and sincerely. The only weakness of the Bill is that it is a non-official one. I would have liked an official Bill to have been brought forward for this very necessary and very simple thing that would have satisfied millions of Tamilians in

Tamil Nadu. Many arguments that were advanced against the Bill brought forward are perhaps more due to the colour of the mover rather than the arguments advanced for its support. One Hon. Member was saying that he was not moving a bill which the Madras State has asked him to move. I regret very much that sometimes it becomes necessary to explain some rudimentary principles. The Madras Government will never ask a non-official bill to be brought forward on its behalf. If the State Government wants the Bill to be brought forward, there are the State representatives in this assembly and they would have brought it forward ; and therefore, to say that the Bill cannot be supported just because the Madras Government has not asked Mr Gupta to bring this Bill, shows that their only argument to fight against the Bill is that their party or their State Government has not instructed them to act in this way. I can well understand the political tremor in their hearts, but that is no argument against the Bill. The arguments advanced by the sponsors of the Bill for renaming Madras Tamil Nadu have not been answered by any one of the speakers who spoke about it.

SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE : I have answered it.

I cannot understand — I very rarely understand — your language and, therefore, I do not know whether there is logic or not but I would say that some of the arguments advanced were not proper. One Hon. Member was saying that there are Telugu-knowing people in Tamilnad, Malayalam and Kanarese-speaking people and, therefore, to name Madras Tamil Nad will create a sort of tremor in their hearts. May I inform this House through you, Sir, that all these arguments were advanced and shattered in my part of the country ? All these arguments did not stand the onslaught of reason and logic. For the sake of informing this House, I may inform you, Sir, that on the 24th February, 1961 the Leader of the House in the State Assembly stood up to say that he was accepting part of the non-official resolution brought forward not by the DMK or any other political party which is considered to be inimical to the Congress, but by a PSP Member. That PSP Member brought forward a non-official resolution for renaming Madras as Tamil Nad and it was discussed for many days and finally the then Finance Minister and Leader of the House, Mr C. Subramaniam, stood up to say that he was accepting a part, or the spirit, of the resolution and added that thereafter all publications of the Madras Government would appear in the name of the Tamil Nad

Government. It is in such a way that all the publications in Tamil in the Tamil Nad Government are being printed and published. As a matter of fact, after making that historic declaration on the floor of the Madras Assembly on 24th February, the very next day the Finance Minister had to present his Budget and in presenting the Budget, the opening words of the Finance Minister were, "In consonance with the declaration made yesterday, I am now presenting to you the Budget of Tamil Nad." Therefore, all the arguments that the Telugu-speaking people, the Malayalam-speaking people, and the Kanarese-speaking people have will be up against this change in name, fall to the ground because part of this has been accepted by the Government. The part relating to the amendment of the Constitution : the word 'Madras' to be deleted and the word "Tamil Nad" to be inserted : was not accepted. Therefore, the sentimental arguments advanced cannot be accommodated even by the Government much less by the Madras Congress leaders. Sir, I am really surprised to see how ill-informed my hon. friends are, those who advanced arguments against the Bill. One Hon. Member stated here that Kollegal is in Tamil Nad. That Hon. Member, unfortunately, is not present in the House at present. I may tell him, and his friends may tell him, that Kollegal today is part of Mysore. It has been taken away from the composite State of Madras and, after the formation of linguistic States, has gone to Mysore. If my Hon. friend is so ill-informed about Kollegal, I am not surprised at his arguments that nowhere in Tamil literature does the word Tamil Nad occur. A politician who cannot understand that Kollegal today does not form part of Tamil Nad cannot be expected to be conversant with Tamil literature. For the edification of the House and for his own edification, I will point out the names of certain books wherein the word "Tamil Nad" is to be found. These are books written 1,800 or 2,000 years ago. I am reading the name in Tamil but the Hon. Member who made that allegation is a Tamilian Congressman and he can understand and the Hon. Deputy Minister who will perhaps be making the reply. She being also a Tamilian, may tell him. The names of *Paripadal*, *Pathitirupathu* and the more popular names of *Silappathikaram* and *Manimekalai*. These are all Tamil classics written more than a thousand years ago and in *Paripadal* it is stated "Thandamizh veli Thamizh Nattu aka-mellam" which means "Tamil Nad which is surrounded by sweet Tamil on all the three sides." In *Pathitirupathu*, a classic written

about 1,800 years ago it is stated 'Imizh kadal veli Thamizhagama' meaning "Tamil Nad which has got the sea as its boundary." In *Sillappathikaram* it is stated "Then Tamizh nannadu" meaning "good Tamil Nad" and in *Manimekalai* it is stated "Sambuththeevinul Tamizhaga marungil": Tamil Nad which is called "Sambuththeevu". If my Hon. friends would like to have more popular illustrations, I would like to refer them to the poems of the poet Kamban and Sekkilar both of whom have definitely used the word Tamil Nad. It was only afterwards that there were three kingdoms, the Cheranadu, the Cholanadu and the Pandyanadu. Tamil Nad is to be found in the classics of Tamil. It is not that there is poverty of ideas in the classics. It only shows that my Hon. friend does not spend much thought or time over the Tamil classics. I may point out for the edification of the House, that when the Congress Government in Tamil Nad purchased the Jaipur palace at Ooty known as Aranmore Palace, they immediately renamed that palace, 'Tamizhagam.' I am pointing this out to say that the Congress there is trying to assuage our feelings, is trying to carry the Tamil Nad people along with them by saying that they have renamed the Aranmore palace Tamizhagam, that they are publishing all the Tamil manifestos as Tamil Nad Government publications; that only for international correspondence, they want the name 'Madras'. They are not prepared to amend the Constitution. If the arguments advanced by some of the Tamil Nad Congress people were to be read by the Chief Minister of Madras, he would turn round and say "You too, Brutus." All the arguments advanced for not renaming it fall flat on the ground because even the Congress Government there does not approve of these arguments.

Another peculiar issue was raised here that the Bill is brought forward only as a publicity stunt of the Communist Party. Why don't we appreciate the Communist Party for its sense of political expediency? Are not all political parties interested in getting political publicity? Is publicity a heinous crime? Why do you publish reports and books on the Five-Year Plans? Is that not publicity, done at public cost? Yet you accuse other political parties, saying that this is publicity. But let me tell this House through you, that even though you defeat the Bill, he has gained that publicity. You are not going to rob him any more of that publicity. When he comes to Tamil Nad he can conveniently face the Tamilians and say, "I pleaded for you but it was the ruling Party that let you down." Therefore you have unawares walked

into Mr Gupta's snare. I would have appreciated it if the ruling party had approached Mr Bhupesh Gupta, and stated, "Do not bring in this non-official Bill ; we ourselves are interested in it. We will bring it forward."


Then Mr Santhanam pointed out that we had an uphill task in retaining Madras ; we had to fight with so many people and we retained Madras. I can claim some amount of credit in that fight and when I was in the thick of the fight, I did not find Mr Santhanam by my side.

AKBAR ALI KHAN : At the cost of Andhra. With the consent of the Andhras. I can say that. That is because the present Government there is providing even today, in the border areas, measures for safeguarding Telugu culture and for imparting the Telugu language. Therefore though Madras has been taken by Tamilians, we have no enmity with the Andhras. But my friend Mr Santhanam was saying that it was such an uphill task, retaining Madras, that we would like to keep Madras. This is not a question of keeping Madras or giving it up ; this is the question of keeping Madras in Tamil Nad and renaming the state as Tamil Nad. Madras after all, is the capital city of Tamil Nad, just as Ahmedabad happens to be the capital city of Gujarat, as Chandigarh happens to be the capital city of Punjab. If this logic of naming the State after the name of the capital city, is to be followed, Kerala should be renamed Trivandrum, Andhra is to be renamed Hyderabad, Punjab is to be renamed Chandigarh and Gujarat should be renamed Ahmedabad.

BHUPESH GUPTA : And Bengal should be renamed Calcutta. My Government, my Congress Government in Madras, is interested in bilingualism. That is because its head Government is interested in having two names for everything ; India that is Bharat, Jan Gana mana and Vande Matharam. They always want to keep two blocks. Take something from here and take something from there. So the Madras Government is having Tamil Nad for the consumption of the Tamilians and Madras for all-India consumption.

It is a very awkward word 'duplicity'. And that is why my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta was saying that some of the Congress people talk in one way there, and talk in another way here. No Congress member can face a Tamilian audience and say that the name 'Madras' should be retained. I challenge it.

T. S. PATTABIRAMAN (*Madras*) : We have faced it during the agitation of the Tamil Arasu Khazagam and my friend

 knows it. What he is saying is a complete travesty of facts.

I know how Mr Pattabiraman faces agitation ; I won't say it. Let us not face each other as Congress and DMK. Let us face the Tamilian public on this single sanctified issue of renaming the State and if you carry along with you 51 per cent of the people, I am prepared to bow my head before you. This is not a party issue at all. The renaming of Madras as Tamil Nad has been accepted by the Communist Party, by the DMK, by the PSP and you will be surprised, by the Madras Branch of the Swatantra Party too. Therefore all parties are one on this issue of renaming Madras as Tamil Nadu.

T. S. PATTABIRAMAN : None of them put it in their election manifesto.

I would present a copy of the DMK election manifesto to him tomorrow. I am sure Mr Pattabiraman knows Tamil. This has been an issue in the Tamil Nad for more than 10 to 15 years. He was saying that only the Tamil Arasu Khazagam was fighting for it. It is true partially because it was only the Tamil Arasu Khazagam that started an agitation for it, but all other political parties were immensely, intimately interested in this issue. They have printed it in their manifestos, in their political speeches and no district conference of the DMK took place without passing this Resolution for renaming Madras as Tamil Nad. Therefore it is not simply on the spur of the moment that I am pleading for it. My sorrow is that my friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta, has stolen the thunder from me by sponsoring this Bill. But for that, I would like to present before this House that this has been the issue all along in Tamil Nad. And they have not answered Mr Bhupesh Gupta : *What do you lose by renaming Madras Tamil Nad ? Nobody has answered that.*

N. M. LINGAM (*Madras*) : Anyway what do you gain by renaming it as Tamil Nad ?

What do I gain ? What have you gained by renaming Parliament Lok Sabha ? What have you gained by renaming the Council of States Rajya Sabha ? What have you gained by renaming the President Rashtrapati ?

Therefore I say, "What do you lose ?". That is important, because if you were to lose something precious, we would not press for it. If you do not lose something fundamental, we will press for it. That other point that was raised was, what do you gain ? We

gain satisfaction sentimentally ; we gain the satisfaction that an ancient name is inculcated in the hearts of millions and scores of millions of people. Is that not enough compensation for the small trouble of changing the name ? Therefore all the arguments that have been advanced have been shattered.

They have advanced an apologetic argument saying that if the State Government had come forward with this, we would have accepted it.

And they are perfectly aware of the composition of the State Legislature where the Congress Party is in a majority. Would you ask the Congress Member in the Madras State Legislature to vote for such a Bill if it were to come there, without the Party whip ? No.

T. S. PATTABIRAMAN : Your party members could have brought forward a resolution in the House and changed the name. Why have you not done it for the past seven or eight years ?

I am coming to that. When we present such a Bill to the Madras Legislature, they say that if you want to rename, an amendment of the Constitution is necessary and an amendment of the Constitution is possible only when you go to Parliament.

T. S. PATTABIRAMAN : I am saying a resolution, not a Bill. A resolution can be made.

I may say for the information of the Hon. Member that we pressed this point during the discussion on a non-official Bill of the PSP. In fact we even staged a walk-out. The DMK and the Communist Party joined together in the walk-out. That is our numerical position there.

When the non-official resolution was discussed in the Madras Assembly, we pressed for the constitutional amendment, and the only explanation offered to us was that it is possible only at the level of Parliament. And when we come to Parliament, we are asked to go back to the State Legislature. We are asked to go to Parliament because you are entrenched in both places, not because your logic is sound, not because your justice is sound, but simply because you are entrenched in both places.

G. RAJAGOPALAN (*Madras*) : We are entrenched because the people vote for us. It has been discussed even during the elections. There had been fasts by certain members and one person even lost his life after fasting. Even after that, we won the election. That shows that the people

still want it as it is — not for the satisfaction of some politicians who want a slogan.

Madam Deputy Chairman, I am very glad that the discussion is becoming very interesting. But I may say, for the information of the House that the DMK has got nothing to do with fasting. The fasting was undertaken by a non-party man, in fact a relative of the Chief Minister of Madras, Mr Sankaralinga Nadar.

And to say that *in spite of the fasting you have not changed shows how human you are*. Therefore, the question was discussed there. We were asked to go to Parliament. When we come to Parliament, we are again sent back to the Legislature. In both places, the answer is as my Hon. friend has stated, "The people have voted for us." Well, that is a fact, a tragic fact, a black fact which ought to be seen.

G. RAJAGOPALAN : In spite of you, the tragedy is still there.

T. S. PATTABIRAMAN : He says that the tragedy will be permanent. The tragedy of the Congress' getting a majority at every election will be a permanent feature and we are prepared to accommodate you.

Madam Deputy Chairman, my friend was saying that this tragedy is going to be permanent. Woe to the country and to the people. That is all what I can say. But I would like to press this point that a Constitution amendment can be thought of and made only through Parliament. That is why we have approached Parliament. If any amendment is brought forward on this, or any suggestion is given that it should be circulated to gather public opinion, we take up that challenge.

I do not ask you to take this as an election issue. Do not be afraid of that.

(Interruptions)

We are not making it an election issue. This is an issue to be taken to the people for getting their consent or otherwise. That is not going to affect your offices. Nobody thinks about that. You may remain there.

This is not a question of an analysis of our different parties. This is a question wherein a particular issue has to be referred to the public. Are you prepared for that ? That is what we ask. You are not prepared for that and that is why I say—

N. M. ANWAR (*Madras*): Madam, on a point of information. I have got the highest respect and regard for my good friend, Mr Annadurai. But will he kindly explain what there is in retaining this name 'Madras' which has got such worldwide publicity? How is he going to meet that point of view? Where is the difficulty in retaining this world-wide name of Madras?

(*Interruptions*)

The only point in answer to the Hon. Member, Mr Anwar, is this. What we gain is, we gain sentimental satisfaction and status for our ancient land. If in Madras we change the name of China Bazaar into Netaji Subhas Chandra Road, nothing is changed in the street but something is changed in our thinking, in our soul, in our fibre. That is why we are pressing for it, not because we think that keeping Madras there will be wrong.

N. M. ANWAR: My question is not that. We agree that there is something good in calling it Tamil Nad. But what is your allergy to Madras which has got a world-wide publicity?

My allergy is, if Madras is used as the name of the State, you confuse the capital with the State. Madras is the name of the capital city, Tamil Nad is the name that ought to be given to the State. There ought to be a distinction between the name of the State and its capital, and therefore I wholeheartedly support the Bill brought forward and I would commend it to the House.

3

The Language Ulcer

RESISTING THE HINDI MENACE

May 1963

The Official Languages Bill, 1963, was introduced, because Article 343 of the Constitution stated categorically that the Official Language of the Union shall be Hindi after 1965. Being aware of the passionate opposition towards such an arbitrary arrangement by the Non-Hindi States, this Bill tried to achieve a tenuous compromise by ruling that English may be also an official language until such time as Hindi could develop into an Official Language.

In an able advocacy of the case for continuance of English as an official language instead of Hindi, Anna traces the history of the language problem. He refers to the apprehension mentioned by the Congressmen themselves during the discussions in the Constituent Assembly and points out that the language resolution in the Constituent Assembly was at best a compromise and therefore it is proper to do some rethinking on the subject.

Anna was prophetic when he stated in his speech, "In this problem, the DMK occupies only a very small place. It depends upon the future of this Bill whether the DMK is to occupy a greater sphere or occupy the same sphere." The overall attitude of the Congress Party to the language issue made that party very unpopular in Tamil Nadu. The people of Tamil Nadu started seeing the DMK as a party that would fight to any extent, at any cost and undergo any suffering to resist the imposition of Hindi imperialism in Tamil Nadu. The mishandling of the language issue by the Congress Party and the language agitations of 1965 created an emotional awakening among the Tamil people and contributed to the electoral victories that DMK secured in the 1967 elections.

MADAM, while I was hearing the lucid explanation offered by the Home Minister, I was almost convinced of his ability at tight-rope walking. He has tried to present the present bill as the most con-

venient measure that could be drafted under the present circumstances. He has also made it appear as harmless as possible. But permit me to say that after the clarification offered by the Home Minister here and elsewhere, I stand unconvinced. I rise to oppose this Bill, conscious of course of the numerical factor — the political arithmetic working in this Assembly. But I think apart from political arithmetic, this august House will pay some attention to political ethics and democratic liberalism, for democracy does not merely mean majority rule. It means, fundamentally, also recognising, sanctifying and safeguarding minority rights and even minority sentiments. That is why I think — even though I am almost alone or, if I may take my colleague Professor Ruthnaswamy along with me — I cannot find any other support in any part here. The Home Minister has stated that we in the opposition strike at one another. This is a problem wherein everybody else strikes at me and yet I think I would be failing in my duty if I did not present what I feel sincerely. Therefore I say that I am thoroughly dissatisfied with the present Bill. I am dissatisfied with the present Bill because it does not satisfy that sentimental objection raised to Hindi being made the official language and that sentimental objection comes not from a small part of India but from the southern side of India as a whole. Of course, my Hon. friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, wanted especially today to drive out English and, therefore, he was very harsh in presenting English; even the romantic Shakespearian characters like Romeo and Juliet were presented in a very harsh manner, but let me remind him that I am proud of Tamil and I am not as proud of English as I am of Tamil, and in my State, Tamil is the official language. Mr Gupta's friend ought to have informed him that I make English speeches only here and in my State I speak in Tamil. I speak and write in Tamil in my State. Though it is run by the Congress, as far as language is concerned, they have made Tamil the official language and they made Tamil also the medium of instruction in higher classes. I would very much like my friend Mr Gupta, to influence his Government as I have to a certain extent influenced my Government.

BHUPESH GUPTA : Sorry I cannot.

I sympathise with his inability but I would like to tell him that I plead for English, I speak for English not because I am enamoured of it, not because I think English ought to be given a higher place than my own mothertongue but because it is the

most convenient tool, it is the most convenient medium which distributes advantages or disadvantages evenly. Very many arguments have been advanced to say that India has got to have a common language and if that base is accepted, one of the Indian languages alone can become the common language. Nobody doubts it. If India is a unitary State, this argument is logical. India is a federal State. Indian society is plural, our political system is composite and in a plural society and composite political system to plead for a single common language will, I think, create injustice unawares, create handicaps unawares to some section of the society. India is not a country. India consists of various ethnic groups, India consists of various language groups and India has been termed very correctly as a sub-continent and that is why we are not able to find out that common working medium as far as an official language is concerned. Even today my Hon. friends of the Congress would forgive me for saying that the Congress has presented and the Government has accepted two National Anthems, Vande Mataram and Jana Gana Mana. Neither of these two National Anthems is in the Hindi language. They come, just as my friend Mr Gupta comes from Bengal. That shows that whatever be the claim that the Hon. Home Minister makes that Hindi has progressed very much, how can I be compensated when I am told that Hindi is becoming progressive, when I have got a language five thousand years old and when I am not able to make that language the official language of India ?

I will say that of all the languages, barring Sanskrit which has become a dead language, Tamil has a literary tradition that goes back to five thousand years. I may tell, Madam Deputy Chairman, for the information of the House that the President is going over to our part of the country to release the English edition of the ancient Tamil work *Tolkappiyam*. *Tolkappiyam* is a grammatical work written more than three thousand years ago. We possess such an inheritance. Let not my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, feel that we are acting like some toadies and therefore we want English. No. He has stated that he pleads for Hindi and he wants Hindi to become the national language and official language yet he did not attempt to learn Hindi and speak in Hindi.

BHUPESH GUPTA : I did not have time.

But he had time to learn *Das Capital* ; he had time to learn the underlying difference between Russian Communism and Chinese Communism. He has had time to read everything except Hindi

and yet he spoke for Hindi here and had a dig at others saying that Shri C. Rajagopalachari said something at a big meeting. It was not as awkward as he has presented. I sat by his side when he addressed the meeting.

He was saying Madam Deputy Chairman, while I was sitting beside him :

“ Because of the Hindi question there is estrangement between myself and my old friends and because of the language question my inveterate enemy, the DMK, is sitting by my side.”

This is what he said and he asked the audience to draw a lesson by saying,

“ Here you find an example of language dividing and language uniting.”

He said, “ English is uniting and Hindi is dividing.”

Therefore, if Mr C. Rajagopalachari or anybody of his way of thinking pleads for English, it is not because they are enamoured of it and they are not enamoured of their own mother tongue. The Home Minister was very sincere when he dealt with the two grammatical phrases “may” and “shall” and he said that they are capable of two interpretations. After modestly saying that he was not a lawyer, not well-versed in law, he said the word “may” is capable of two interpretations and he also stated a very dangerous political principle. He said that the Bill or any law passed by any Government will be effective and fruitful only when we know who implements it and how it is implemented. This is the worst part of this Bill. Any law should be easy of interpretation, not only by august individuals like the Home Minister but even by ordinary political people who are to come after him. If the Home Minister were to assure me that everything will be all right if the Act is simply implemented properly, I will have the fullest confidence in Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri, but may I ask if Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri is going to be here for all times to come ? Should he not become the President of India ? Therefore, just to say, “ Well, look at me. I am here and I will implement it properly ”—I say that no law should be left to the vagaries of future Governments.

Another dangerous thing that the Home Minister stated was this. While we were discussing this, he said there were the courts to decide. Madam Deputy Chairman, if every Act is to be taken to the court and if for the implementation of every Act we have to be at the beck and call of courts and judgments, if we have to rely on the lawyers and the judges — and the Home Minister has made

very pungent remarks : we know that the lawyers differ, the judges differ — where is the certainty ? Why do you enact such an imperfect Bill throwing us to the wolves, asking us to go to the courts to know the real meaning or the judicial meaning of the simple word 'may' ? The Home Minister has stated that if 'may' is replaced by 'shall' there may arise so many difficulties. Difficulties do arise, but the Law Department remains there to ease out the difficulties and present a Bill acceptable to all. I do not think that the Law Department which is able to prepare Bills every week even curtailing Fundamental Rights, is too poverty-stricken in ideas and inefficient to present a perfect Bill. Therefore on the face of it and on the interpretation offered by the Home Minister himself, I think that the Bill is imperfect.

Another very curious thing the Home Minister said, Of course he presented it in a very sweet manner. He said, "I went to Madras to the Hindi Prachar Sabha Convocation and when I met thousands of graduates there I was wondering whether I should address them in English and they said speak in Hindi." Is it any wonder, Madam Deputy Chairman, for the Home Minister to address in Hindi in a Hindi Convocation. To whom does it do credit ? The amazing part of it is that the Home Minister was doubtful whether Hindi would be understood there in the Hindi Prachar Sabha Convocation. He was doubtful whether Hindi would be understood and that is why he enquired what language he should speak in. Therefore let us not fall in for such things. I would request the Home Minister to leave such funny things to younger people and present more cogent, more logical and more responsible arguments in support of the Bill.

Now, I would like to deal with this question under three or four broad headings — the problem of language during the Constituent Assembly proceedings, the experience gained during these 15 years, thirdly we should take into consideration the Prime Minister's assurance and fourthly we should find out whether this Bill gives effect to that assurance of the Prime Minister.

First of all, let us take the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly. Now, my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta was proving here that English can never be the official language because it is a foreign language and only Hindi can be the official language and he said there are only a handful of people, toadies and lackeys—

BHUPESH GUPTA : I gave the percentage.
You just go through your speech later.

—who question Hindi and plead for English. Madam Deputy Chairman, I have got here the remarks made on the floor of the Constituent Assembly by Mr B. Das of Orissa. He accepted Hindi. After accepting Hindi he has stated ;

“ But that does not mean that we have no apprehensions, we have no suspicions, we have no fears. The fears and suspicions that we harbour today were harboured by us till a couple of years ago when officialdom was manned by the English. When the Civil Service examinations were held in London naturally the Englishmen preponderated in the Service. Now that the Civil Service and other examinations are being held in Delhi naturally hereafter the Hindi-speaking province—Madam, Mr Das was very prophetic !

“...I am not talking of the immediate future but 15 years hence — the people of Hindi-speaking provinces such as U. P. and C. P. will preponderate in the Civil and other services.” Dr. Subbarayan, also pleaded for retaining English or for Hindustani with Roman Script.

The language clause introduced in the Constitution, though it may be an agreed solution, was at best a compromise and in all compromises we have got every legitimate right for a reappraisal and rethinking. My friend was saying that as far as Hindi was concerned it was a settled fact that Hindi is to become the official language in 1965 and nobody could question it. No, Sir, that is not the case, because our Constitution is flexible, our political system is democratic and we have got every right to amend the Constitution.

We are amending the Constitution for the sixteenth time and I would plead for a reappraisal of the language issue and ask this august House to inform the Government that instead of allowing this bitterness to grow, this rancour to continue, instead of the two camps being created artificially, they should take up a reappraisal of the language question and keep till that time the status quo. If that is done, I would be perfectly satisfied with the motives of the Government. Were not alternatives offered to the Home Minister by his own partymen at the party conclaves ? Were all the members of the Congress Party fully satisfied with the Bill ? Did it not need the entire cajoling of the Home Minister and the persuasion of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister, to coax them ? Am I divulging any secret when I say that ? Did it not appear in all the papers ? Were the Congress M.P.s from the

southern States satisfied ? Did they not fight for the word ' shall ' ? Did they not fight for the deletion of the clause relating to the Reviewing Committee ? What was offered to them ? Of course, I do not have personal contact with the Home Minister but even from a distance he is a charming man and to his party people he ought to be very charming. Therefore he had a charming way of dispelling their suspicions but the problem is not their suspicions. The people suspect the motives behind this Bill. It may be argued that 42 per cent of the people—

M. B. LAL : He should be given more time.

N. M. ANWAR : He must be given more time.

HON. MEMBERS : Yes, he must be given time.

It was stated that Hindi has got the claim to become the official language because it was spoken by 42 per cent of the population. If this 42 per cent were to be scattered throughout the length and breadth of India, the argument would be logical and it would be ethical also but this 42 per cent is concentrated in compact and contiguous areas. It is not spread over. Therefore if 42 per cent is taken into consideration you are conferring a permanent, perennial advantage on a compact and contiguous area in India and conversely a permanent disadvantage to other areas. And therefore it is that this 42 per cent cannot be taken into consideration. If Hindi were to be spoken throughout India even by 20 per cent of the people, then we can say that of all the languages Hindi is known from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas. Twenty per cent of our population do know Hindi and, therefore, let Hindi become the official language. I can understand it, though I cannot support it. I can understand the logic behind it. But what is the logic behind presenting this 42 per cent, in a compact area of U.P., Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh as an argument. It was Mr T. T. Krishnamachari who once said " India, that is Bharat, that is U.P."....

SANTOSH KUMAR BASU : Shri Shyama Prasad Mookerjee said that.

Shri Shyama Prasad Mookerjee said it and T. T. Krishnamachari repeated it once. I distinctly remember it. It first emanated from Bengal. All revolutionary thoughts emanate from Bengal.

Therefore, the 42 per cent, entrenched in a compact area cannot be taken as an index of ethical majority. It is merely an arithmetical majority. Therefore I say that Hindi has no claim to becoming the official language. As the Home Minister was saying,

we have had linguistic States working in full harmony. We have developed our regional languages. We do not even call them regional languages. We call them the national languages. In my State Tamil is the national language and it is the official language. Each of these national or linguistic States is developing in its own way. I would very much request Members of this House to come along with me and note the present political situation and find out whether your official language problem fits in. Here you have got linguistic States fully conscious of their nationalism. They are developing their national languages. Just as they are developing their national language, Telugu in Andhra, Malayalam in Kerala and Tamil in Tamil Nad, so also in U.P. Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and other places, they have got every right to develop Hindi as their national language, as the official language there. I found from the papers that in Punjab, which is considered to be bilingual with Hindi and Punjabi, the Leader of the House was saying some days back that he had great difficulty making Hindi become the official language there. Therefore, I would request, I would plead with the Hindi States to make their language their State official language. Work it out and make it acceptable to everyone else, if they want it.

SANTOSH KUMAR BASU : What is your solution to the problem of a common language for the whole of India ? Maybe my solution to the problem is negative, not positive. I will present it in this way. Keep the status quo by amending the Constitution. Let there be a solution not necessarily by us. We are not the last scions of India. Perhaps we are more confused. We have more political rancour. In future times a proper solution may be arrived at. Therefore, let us not seal it. Let us have the status quo maintained by an amendment of the Constitution. I do not say it is my solution. It is my request, it is my pleading and I would say that on a solution of this issue depends the entire political future of South India, especially Tamil Nad.

B. K. P. SINHA (*Bihar*) : Why not The Hague Court ? I know I am facing the Home Minister and in facing him I say as a Gandhian he should give me the right of protesting against what I consider to be evil and unjust. I am prepared to take any consequence, and I am not alone in Tamil Nad. And therefore it is that I would say, respect the feelings of people who have got a hoary language, who think that by the imposition of Hindi as the official language there will be political rancour.

Well, arguments are advanced that English is a foreign language. Again I give an example which may perhaps irritate my friend, Shri Bhupesh Gupta. In the United States of America only 20 per cent of the people went from the British Isles. Of the 80 per cent of people, some of them went from Spain, some from Portugal, some from Italy and other European countries. Yet America has chosen English as the official language. My friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, smiles : " Oh, that Anglo-American conspiracy, we are well aware of it." Yet I would say that Americans have got as much self-respect as we have got. Then, they thought that if they could adopt English as the official language, they could convey the sentiments of so many people. Again, I would give another classical example. Ireland was fighting England as ferociously, if not more ferociously than as the Congress fought the British. In Ireland De Valera said : " If we are given the option Ireland or the Gaelic language, I would give up Ireland, and I would keep the Gaelic language." When Ireland became free, the Irish Parliament met and decided that Gaelic should be the official language and along with it English should be the official language as well. After all, we do not have any rancour or hatred towards the British. We happen to be members of the Commonwealth though my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, would like India to be in some other group. Fortunately or unfortunately India is a member of the Commonwealth. You can remain in the Commonwealth. You can use all technology. You can look at the world through the window of English, but English is a foreign language. It will be considered to be derogatory to us if the British were to remain here and say, take it. Then, we will have to resist it. But now there is no question of imposition of English by the British. As a matter of fact, as my friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta said, the British would very much like English to get out of India because of the low standard of English here. Therefore, it is not as if there is any imposition of an alien language by an alien power. We ourselves, for the sake of convenience, for the sake of expediency, because of the force of circumstances, are asked to choose this medium, which happens to be foreign to U.P., foreign to Madhya Pradesh, foreign to Tamil Nad, foreign to Andhra, therefore the advantages and disadvantages are evenly distributed.

Now, suppose Hindi becomes the official language. The Prime Minister has been saying that Hindi should be simplified. If a language becomes the national language, take it from me,

from my experience of the working of the Tamil language, the pressure will be to make it more and more pure and not more and more simple. You can never simplify the language after making it official or national. If you come to our part of the country, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, you will find new words taken from the old vocabulary of Tamil. In the case of Tamil mixed with Sanskrit, the mixture has been taken out and there is purity of language there. That alone will happen in Hindi States. When that happens and when we are asked to learn simple Hindi, is it not a handicap race? For Hindi-knowing people in Hindi States, Hindi is the mother-tongue, Hindi is the State official language, Hindi is the medium of instruction and Hindi is the official language in the Union.

How many advantages have they got? How many disadvantages have you put on us? Hindi is not our mother-tongue, though if we learn Hindi, we can speak as our esteemed friend, Shri Satyanarayana.

You want curiosities in North India. That is say, however efficient, however proficient we may become in any language, unless it is our mother-tongue, it cannot offer us advantages as that language would offer to members of that group, and that is why we say that behind this Language Bill there is the political problem. You may not be aware of it. The Hon. Minister has stated at the fag end of his speech that there is no ulterior motive. There cannot be ulterior motive when such gentlemen are handling such things. But I say whether you have a motive or not, the consequence will be that. The consequence of the imposition of Hindi as the official language will create a definite, permanent and sickening advantage to the Hindi-speaking States. That was what was stated by Shri B. Das of Orissa in the Constituent Assembly, by Dr. Subbaroyan and by very many others. And even in the Rajya Sabha some years back when an allied question was discussed, my Hon. friend, Shri Avinashilingam Chettiar, raised his voice of warning. Therefore, do not think that it is merely confined to the DMK. In this problem, the DMK occupies only a very small place. It depends upon the future of this Bill whether the DMK is to occupy a greater sphere or occupy the same sphere. But let me tell this House through you, Mr Vice-Chairman with all respect, that if Hindi is imposed as the official language, the DMK will unfold its relentless fight, its relentless agitation against this imposition of Hindi whatever be the consequences.

The other day I heard the Home Minister saying, "During the emergency the Parliament is empowering me to take what action I like." I am aware of it and being cognisant of it my conscience will not permit me to keep quiet if this imposition of Hindi were to become a fact. The entire South will revolt against this. When I say the entire South, I know that there are Andhras, Malayalees and others who will say : "No no. We are not with you." I am aware of that. But those people who understand the significance of the Hindi menace and those people who realise the consequences of the Hindi menace, they are with me.

AN HON. MEMBER : The Madras minorities are with you. It is simply because I am in a minority that I am pleading. If I had been in a majority, I would have carried the day. Therefore, it is not an accusation. Because you are saying that, I have to point out that the Congress Party itself controls power not because it is in the majority, but it controls power through minority votes.

K. P. SINHA : Largest single block of votes. The Congress Party got during the last elections 72 per cent of the seats in the Lok Sabha on an aggregate poll of 45 per cent of the votes in its favour, whereas the opposition groups got 28 per cent of the seats despite the fact that they polled 55 per cent of the votes.

(Interruptions)

Please do not provoke me into presenting these stark realities. Therefore, I would say that it is not a question of majority or minority. It is a question of justice and freedom, it is a question of consultation and concord, it is a question of amity and affection or animosity. You will have to decide it in that way and not through numbers. Therefore it is that I say I request the Home Minister, though the Bill is passed by the Lok Sabha, to withdraw the Bill, to take the Prime Minister's assurance into his consideration. and that is the last item that I want to press upon him.

What is the Prime Minister's assurance ? Before saying what the Prime Minister assured, I would ask the Home Minister to go into the genesis of that assurance, why was it given, when it was given, how it was given and to whom it was given. A Prime Minister of a State will not go on giving assurances to anybody at any time. An assurance from the Prime Minister becomes necessary because he finds a sort of political atmosphere in the

country that needs soothing, that needs assuaging, and it was at that time that the Prime Minister had come forward to dispel our apprehensions. He stated that English would continue as the associate official language. Why don't we include the words "Associate official language?" Well, somebody may ask: "Are you not satisfied with the title? It is an official language." But if I were to be satisfied with the title, my friend Mr Vajpayee would be dissatisfied because it is official languages and not official language. Therefore, I have got nothing against Mr Vajpayee. I can understand his words, and as a matter of fact in politics as well as in other things extremes can understand extremes. It is only the mixtures that create difficulty. My friend, Mr Vajpayee, is swearing by Hindi. I appreciate his courage. I wish my State also contains as many Vajpayees as possible. He is fighting for his language, fighting not only for his language to become the State official language but to become the all-India official language, and if my friend, Mr Vajpayee, were to be given full scope, he would make it even a world language. I like him very much for that. But what the Congress Government has done is this. They on the one hand went on encouraging the Hindi people, and on the other hand they went on giving confidence to us also. Wherever there were occasions to meet people who wanted Hindi as an official language they said: "Do not be afraid. Let 1965 dawn, Hindi will become the official language." And Shri Vajpayee was thoroughly satisfied. That is why the present Bill dissatisfies him, because another ten years' lease of life is given to English and he turns round and asks: "Where is my Hindi?" You have given rich assurances to us. You have stated that English will remain an associate language indefinitely. The word "indefinitely" was explained by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in this way: "As long as you want, as long as the non-Hindi people want; and I will leave the entire question to be decided not by Hindi-knowing people but by non-Hindi knowing people." Now by giving assurances to us and by encouraging men of Mr Vajpayee's persuasion you are creating unnecessary rancour between myself and Mr Vajpayee. If you are to allow Mr Vajpayee to develop Hindi in his U.P. and if you are to allow English to be the link between me and Mr Vajpayee, I could not get a better friend than Mr Vajpayee. Therefore I think that through this Bill you are creating political rancour, and so the Prime Minister's assurance has not been carried out through this Bill. Of course clause by clause people argue.

Well, the Prime Minister stated that English would continue. English continues. How ? Not as an associate official language along with Hindi, but for some purposes which the Government will decide. But the Prime Minister has stated that English will remain as an associate official language, and if the Prime Minister's assurance is to be fully carried out, I would request the Home Minister to drop this Bill, gird up his loins, take the consequences that may arise out of it because they are courageous people, and bring forward an amendment of the Constitution maintaining the status quo, that is keeping English as the official language. Please do not think that because it is foreign we should discard it. This is the age of getting know-how and technical assistance from any country that gives them and therefore let it be the technical assistance that the English people have given to us or handed over to us till, as my Hon. friend here put it, a permanent solution is thought of in a calmer mood perhaps by people who come after. Therefore, I would request the Home Minister to drop this Bill, because I may tell him that the moment this Bill was discussed, the calm atmosphere in South India was disturbed. Everywhere, in every town in Tamil Nad, you can find two groups discussing this problem, discussing it not in an amicable way, but discussing it with political rancour. And when the Home Minister has stated that the enemy is there to be driven out, is it the proper time to create such a discord ? Is it the proper time for disturbing the political concord and political climate ? As a sagacious statesman, the Home Minister should look into the matter and drop this Bill, amend the Constitution, keep English as the official language till the non-Hindi-speaking people decide about it.

When I am saying this, I am not being ludicrous because a member of the Planning Commission, Shri Shriman Narayan, has stated only last week that only the non-Hindi people should decide the question. And another member of the Congress Party itself, in a meeting presided over, I think, by the Home Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, was kind enough to say — I remember to have read his name as Mr Misra only last week — that a blank cheque should be given to the non-Hindi people, let them write the dead-line. That is political magnanimity, that is political sagacity. And through this Bill, the political sagacity and statesmanship expected of you is being thwarted and you are driving a wedge into the calm political atmosphere and the united outlook that you have created during the one year and

more. Therefore, with a lone voice, though it might be as Mr Bhupesh Gupta stated, a noisy voice, I would plead with the Home Minister to consider this as the feeling of the official representative of the DMK and the unofficial emissary of the non-Hindi States of the South, those people who understand the menace of Hindi and its consequences. Therefore, I plead before the Home Minister for a reappraisal of the language issue, pending that reappraisal, for an amendment of the Constitution for maintaining the status quo and keeping English as the official language.

UNITY OR UNIFORMITY

March 1965

Hindi was to become the official language of the Indian Union after January 26, 1965, according to Article 343 of the Constitution of India. The Tamil people prepared themselves for a massive Constitutional agitation on the 26th January 1965 to express their strong resentment against the imposition of Hindi. True to the tradition of all establishments, the then Congress Government of Madras led by Thiru M. Bhaktavatsalam, looked at the forthcoming agitation of January 26 as a law and order problem and failed to properly appreciate the explosive situation that was in the making. On the night of 25th January 1965, Anna and 3000 of his party men were taken into preventive custody and were released only on 2nd February 1965. During the week of 26th January to 2nd February 1965, Tamil Nadu witnessed a mass upsurge and mass fury followed by violence in a number of places that it has seldom witnessed in its history. Two Congress Ministers, Thiruvalluvar C. Subramaniam and O. V. Alagesan, resigned from the Central Cabinet on the language issue. After the arrest of Anna and the Leaders of the DMK Party, the students took over the leadership of the movement.

Following his release from the prison, Anna was participating in the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address in the Rajya Sabha. He takes the occasion to repudiate on behalf of his Party, any responsibility for the violence that followed the agitation.

Anna was not dogmatic in opposing Hindi's becoming a common language for all times. He speaks in the language of a statesman when he says "perhaps we were not the proper persons, having certain live passions with us, to arrive at a solution to this problem."

The language agitations that took place in Tamil Nadu in January and February 1965 and the earnest pleas of statesmen like Anna at the Rajya Sabha had its effect in slowing down the pace of imposition of Hindi in the country as a whole.

MADAM Deputy Chairman, we thank the President for the Address that he was pleased to deliver to Parliament on the 17th of February, welcoming the Members of Parliament and pointing out the strenuous efforts they have to make "to guide the nation with unflinching faith and firm resolve." I do not think that the inclusion of the words 'unflinching' and 'firm' is without significance. Perhaps the President feels, and rightly so, that the methods by which we are guiding the nation, and our resolve, are not up to the mark. The people today find that this Government has led the country and the people to great dangers, the dangerous food situation, the high prices, corruption and laxity in various other spheres. Therefore, we cannot accept the President's remarks that his Government has carried out all that was expected of them.

Now the one point on which everyone of us should echo the sentiments expressed by the President is in expressing our distress over the violent activities in the southern part of the country. Nobody feels happy about it, especially the people coming from the State. Nobody can encourage it, especially those people who are intimately connected with the welfare of the country and the people who are affected by the outburst of violence.

Therefore, if any Member here or elsewhere thinks that people in the South of any political persuasion, encouraged or instigated violence, my answer would be that they are misreading not merely the history of this country, not merely the present trends, but also the functioning of the various political parties. I along with the President and Members of this august House, am one with them in condemning the outburst of violence. Though our party has been held responsible for all these things, I most sincerely and honestly declare that it had no part, in either the students' agitation, or in the subsequent violent activities. I am saying that not merely to vindicate the fair name of my Party but especially to convince the Hon. Members of this august House that we have a philosophy as noble as that of any other political party, and therefore there is no connection with the students' agitation as far as the DMK is concerned. The view of the party was that this —

G. RAMACHANDRA (*Nominated*) : May I ask a question.

Is the unity of India part of that philosophy ?

The unity of India has been taken to be a part and parcel of our philosophy ; not because of your legislation but because of the Chinese menace. We felt that we should stand or fall together.

G. RAMACHANDRAN : Supposing the Chinese menace is taken away, will you go back to disunity ?

I mentioned the Chinese menace as a symbol, not as the only reason. And since the Prime Minister is here and since I had no occasion to have an intimate talk with him about the happenings in the South and since he has been supplied only with the Government's version about what happened, I may take this House into my confidence and state that the student agitation was started on 25th January and I along with 3,000 of my partymen was arrested on the mid-night of the 25th and we were released only on February 2nd. About the violent activities that took place between 25th January and the 2nd February, we read in the papers inside the Jail. To level the charge against the DMK of having instigated these things, is not only irrelevant and off the mark, but it cuts at the very root of the noble principles to which we are wedded. I know that the Prime Minister of the country, has seen both Chauri Chaura and Jallianwallah. He has seen detention as well as defiance of law. Nobody present here has got as rich an experience of human passions as he, and he knows how, when human passions are not allowed to have a constitutional outlet, those human passions surge and inundate every sphere of human activity. So even if some people come to the hasty conclusion that some political party has been behind these things, I do not think that the Prime Minister of this country, the Hon. Shri Lal Bahadur will rush to that hasty conclusion of charging DMK with all these activities.

As a matter of fact, if my party supplies him with adequate material he will find, and he will be convinced, that we have not written a single appeal, not written a single editorial, not written a single article, either welcoming or encouraging such agitation. As a matter of fact, speaking personally — and I am speaking on behalf of my party too — we are a party to an honourable settlement in our part of the country that no political party should ask students to take part in political agitations. I charge the party to which the Prime Minister belongs, of having broken that pledge in our State. The DMK kept aloof from all student activities. But the leaders of the Congress party in Madras went all the way to Tanjore to convene a youth congress or youth students' organisation. May it not be appropriate if I were to inform this House that one of the student leaders still belongs to the youth congress, and that that student leader was arrested and kept in jail and against him there is a prosecution pending. He belongs to the youth congress, and

he also happens to be the son of a police officer. Therefore, to charge the DMK of having instigated all these things, is off the mark and I have stated that not merely to vindicate the fair name of my party. If this august House got the wrong impression, if you allow yourself to become the victims of obsession, you are not going to solve the problem. If you think that a particular political party is at the back of it, then the next thought would be how best to put it down and what ought to be the repressive measures to put down that political party. You may succeed in that. You have got adequate powers.

But let me tell you this, that if you are in the clutches of that obsession, you are not going to solve the wider, the general and more necessary problem of how best to curtail outbursts of violence. We discussed not only in this House, but in the whole country, how best to curtail the outbursts of violent activities. Did we not discuss it in this country when there was violence for the formation of the Andhra State? What did we do at that time? We appealed to noble human instincts. We stood up against violence. Otherwise we are not going to solve any problem. What did you do when there was the Maharashtra agitation and that agitation took a violent turn? We again met in conferences and seminars and committee rooms, and we appealed to the people to give up violence. They gave up violence, but when? When the Maharashtra State was a reality. Was there not an outburst of violence with regard to Maha Gujarat and even with regard to Vidarbha? Did not the grand old man of the Congress, Shri M. S. Aney, stand for Vidarbha? We were all witness to all those ghastly things that took place during the language riots between the Assamese and the Bengalees.

Therefore, my point is, however much we may be against violence, whatever may be our sermons and quotations from the scriptures, this instinct of violence has not been curbed. Then how are we going to tackle it? That ought to be the problem that the Government headed by the distinguished Members, who have seen as I have said, both Chauri Chaura and Jallianwallah, should tackle. They should look at that aspect. Instead of that, they are getting support from laws that are already in their hands and through the D.I.R. as well. Therefore, the first point that I would like to make is this: try to analyse and probe the matter as to how and why peaceful people — I would even say docile people — how was it possible for them to become so ferocious

within 24 hours ? In the towns where this violence took place, I have not seen in any of these towns any people with ferocity. I have gone to almost all these towns, more than once. And all those people are peace-loving. And yet when the spate of violence broke, they broke all canons of even decency.

All human values were set at naught. You ought to find out the real reason behind these outbursts of violence. I would say that violence after all is uncontrolled emotion. Violence is uncontrolled emotion and you are not going to put down violence by police methods alone, because we have not yet arrived at — the world itself has not yet arrived at — the correct answer to this question, which follows which. People argue that violence follows repression ; there are others who argue that repression follows violence. The world has not yet come to a proper answer because there are two parties to the issue and that is why in our country, most of the Bar Associations have passed resolutions saying that there ought to be a judicial enquiry into every one of these activities and also a probe into the language problem.

Many Hon. friends of this House have been talking for the past two days and when I heard some of them speak I was not angry. I was in agony. They were saying that there was bad propaganda in Tamil Nad, that there was a misapprehension about the whole issue, that we have got unjustifiable fears and so on. Please do not underestimate our intelligence. There is absolutely no misapprehension. There is real and genuine apprehension. There is a lot of difference between misapprehension and apprehension and I am happy to find that the President is employing the word “apprehension” whereas the Prime Minister times without number, is employing the word “misapprehension”. We are not just a score of erring school students. We are not oblivious of reality. We have read into everyone of your activities. We have read into everyone of your explanations and all the explanations offered hitherto have not satisfied our soul. It is so easy to argue that a common language is needed for the unity of India. Before we analyse that, may I request the Members of this august House to make a distinction between unity and uniformity. Is it merely unity that you want ? You want uniformity through the bulldozer of a common language. If it is uniformity that you are going to aim at, you are not going to achieve it come what may. This country consists, as the late Prime Minister has stated in this very august House, of different ethnic elements, different cultural

elements and different linguistic groups. It is only unity within this diversity that we should arrive at, and not by destroying the fine niceties of this diversity, mistaking uniformity for unity. May I ask Members of this House and the Prime Minister whether language alone is the cementing force needed for the unity of this country? Is it language alone that stands as a handicap to that unity? Certainly not. There are regional imbalances, there are regional leanings, there are linguistic leanings. All these things have got to be bridged if you want to have a sort of unity without uniformity for this country.

AKBAR ALI KHAN: Would you like to have a lingua franca or not for this country? If so, what should be the lingua franca?

I would like to have a lingua franca for India through a very natural process, in due course of time, without the backing of a Government and it ought to be sponsored by the people. Anything coming from the Government, especially from this Government, is anathema for millions of our people.

When I speak of any proposal from this Government, I was mentioning the Central Government, I have got a sneaking sympathy, affection for my own Government. Therefore, I would say that you show haste to find out a common language for this country in the name of unity of this country, when we are discussing the Official Languages Bill here. I said that perhaps we were not the proper persons, having certain live passions with us, we are not perhaps the proper persons to arrive at a solution to this problem.

My friend, Mr Mani speaking the other day, pleaded for a twenty-year lease of life for English. There were others who said fifteen years or ten years. Leave aside the number of years. What does that signify? They are not prepared to take Hindi as the official language now. What does that show? An apprehension, a very genuine apprehension, in the minds of people, irrespective of parties. Therefore, should you not take into consideration the genuine apprehensions in the minds of people irrespective of parties? My friend, who preceded me, said "be firm". He asked our Prime Minister to be firm. I know the dictum in politics that indiscipline and law-breaking should be put down with an iron hand. In spite of this apparent weakness, I know the Prime Minister has got an iron hand; but to win hearts, iron hands are not necessary. You can break heads but to win hearts something

better than iron hands are needed and I think that the Prime Minister of this country is capable of both a golden heart and iron hands.

M. RUTHNASAMY : We do not see the heart but we see the hand.

I still have confidence in human generosity. I have not lost confidence. He should have the golden heart. I may even add, gold of pre-Morarji days, not fourteen carat. Therefore, when Members of this House were telling us that there is misapprehension, I wanted to clear the misapprehension under which they are suffering : what is our objection to Hindi ? I want to be very plain and very frank. We have no objection to any language. Especially when I hear my friend, Mr Vajpayee, speaking, I think that is a very good language but when I hear other Hindi speakers, I think, " Oh no, it is not as good as that of Mr Vajpayee." Therefore, I would say that we are not only not prepared for Hindi, but Hindi itself is not prepared to become the official language. Have you taken into consideration the deficiency in that language ? And is it with such a defective language that you want to bulldoze all other languages ? Certainly not. Even Pakistan tried and failed. I would plead with the Prime Minister to take our viewpoint into consideration even though a colleague of his has stated " Be firm." Be firm certainly, when you deal with the Chinese but not with your own countrymen. Be fine in your feelings, be golden in your heart and be statesmanlike at every step you take, because one step faultily taken by you will create a conflagration in this country. I can charge this Government, and even my Government, with having committed acts of commission and omission. I was talking about the 25th of January. We had our programme on the 26th to have a day of protest or a day of mourning not against the Republic Day Celebrations, but against the imposition of Hindi as announced on the 26th.

What would the Prime Minister expect of the mood that ought to be adopted by the Ministers there ? The Chairman of my Party happens to be the Leader of my Opposition in the House there. Have we not the right to expect the Chief Minister of our State to ask for the Leader of the Opposition and have a discussion on this matter ? Have we become so unpatriotic, so belittled, that we should not be taken into confidence by the Chief Minister of the State ? I found from the papers that the Prime Minister, Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri, has announced that he is going to convene a meeting of party leaders here. If he were to follow the diplomacy

or the statesmanship of the Chief Minister of my State, he would not have issued such a statement because from the 25th, right up to this date, the Chief Minister of Madras has followed a policy, unimaginative, undemocratic and unhelpful in its attitude. I very much expected when the Prime Minister was there in Kerala that he would visit our State, I do not know whether he took the decision himself or whether somebody asked him to take that decision ; he did not visit our State.

I went through the proceedings in the papers when there was that Assam riot. When riots took place in Assam on the language question, I found from the papers that the late lamented Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, flew all the way to Assam, toured the entire Assam State, addressed four or five public meetings at Shillong, Nowgong and other places and assuaged the feelings of the people there. What have you done ? I put the question not in anger but in agony. When our men were being shot down dead, when our property was being destroyed, when our people were hunted like wild animals, you came to Kerala and yet you did not have the courtesy to come to the State of Madras. You could have addressed us through the AIR, and asked the people to be calm. I may add, that next to Jawaharlal Nehru we hold you in very high esteem, and yet you failed us at the appropriate moment. I am very sorry. I do not think we needed help in any other matter, or at any other time except at that time. Our Chief Minister would not take into his confidence the Vice-Chancellors, members of the Bar, magnates of the Press or political party leaders : he would take into confidence only the I. G. of Police, and the Commissioner of Police. It was only law and order. Nanda was present in his fullest form, not Shastri and that is why the situation was aggravated. And if you take that into consideration you would at least suggest to the State Government not to go on issuing newer and newer irritants by arresting wholesale, DMK members using even the DIR. The Treasurer of my Party, Deputy Leader of Opposition, in the State Assembly, Mr Karunanidhi is being held under DIR. My friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta, with righteous indignation questioned the necessity and the justifiability of extending the life of this DIR and he has himself answered, that it is not for the security of this country, but for the security of the ruling party. How are you going to answer that charge ? That charge does not come from Mr Bhupesh Gupta alone ; it comes from popular opinion. People think that you use only police methods and not

political methods. How do other countries under such circumstances solve the problem ? We have got our linguistic problem here. My friend Mr Vajpayee, would like to have Hindi alone as the official language. My friend Mr Mani, would like to plead for a twenty years' lease. The Prime Minister of this country would like to say, of course Hindi will come but it will come in its own way. Mr Nanda will go and issue a statement one day that Hindi is bound to come. Another day he says that indefinite bilingualism cannot be avoided. What are we talking about ? Is there anything definite in any one of these statements ? Is it policy or expediency ? Are you trying to assuage us or are you going to appraise the situation ? That is why when I spoke on the Official Language Bill last time, I said that the time for appraisal had come. You cannot present a *fait accompli* from the Constitution and say, here in the Constitution it is said that Hindi is the official language and therefore it ought to be there for all time to come and when I question the necessity, the sanctity and the justifiability of Hindi's being the official language, I am not questioning or going against the Constitution.

In fact, if I were to be very dedicated to the Constitution I would plead for amendments to the Constitution wherever I find that an amendment is needed. Our Constitution is not rigid ; it is flexible and I can very well visualise the mood in which the framers of the Constitution at that time thought that Hindi alone should become the official language. That was the day when the Union Jack was brought down, and the tricolour flag fluttered high above the skies. When you, the resurrectors of this country, the freedom fighters, sat together jubilantly, you could not have been expected to take a telescopic view of this problem. That is not a defect that I am pointing out. When one is in a jubilant mood he is not expected to have a telescopic vision of things. Fifteen to seventeen years afterwards, how many things have happened which belie the necessity of, or the justifiability for Hindi ? What are the arguments advanced even by the most enthusiastic of the Hindi-knowing people ? They say that forty per cent of the people speak Hindi and therefore it should become the official language or the common language. We have rebutted that argument times without number that if you can even say that twenty per cent of people all over India speak Hindi there is justification enough for making it a common language or a link language or the official language. But your forty per cent is confined to a

particular area, U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan, contiguous places, and therefore it has not permeated into Indian society and that is why we say that the argument that forty per cent of the people speak Hindi is not valid for making it the official language for India. You have also put forward the argument that English being a foreign language, we should give it up and take one of the Indian languages. I am not enamoured of English.

He is my friend, the Hon. Mr C. Subramaniam. He was there when I was a Member there. Did he see me speaking in English at any time in our Assembly? No. I remember the time when there was a privilege Motion, and both of us spoke in English. At every other time Mr Subramaniam and myself and most of the members of our Party spoke in Tamil and not in English. Please do not think that we are enamoured of English. And I may say that whatever the English language could give, we have already taken and imported into our Tamil Language.

I can make bold to say that next to English if you make Tamil the official language next week, it will fulfil all purposes. The Tamil language has developed to such an extent as far as parliamentary affairs are concerned. When I say that English ought to continue as an official language, I am not pleading for English. At least if I had pleaded for English when the British were here, I would have been compensated, but what do I get now if I plead for English? Please do not think that the DMK is enamoured of it. On the other hand, may I ask you, if you are so much against English, do you dare give up English altogether? You have taken English as one of the three languages to be compulsorily studied. Therefore, I cannot find out what you are arriving at: whether you are antipathic to English, or whether you are swearing by English. I can understand my friend, Mr Vajpayee. He can understand me, but both of us can never understand you. That is the whole trouble. That is why I say that there ought to be a general, genuine reappraisal of the whole problem.

AKBAR ALI KHAN: We will accept the compromise formula reached between you and Mr Vajpayee.

If the ruling party were to give us a blank cheque and say that they will carry out what myself and Mr Vajpayee say, we are prepared, but I know your attitude towards Mr Vajpayee and myself. Therefore, I am not going to walk into that snare. I was talking about the policy of the Government with regard to English, whether they are against it, or for it. I cannot understand. When I read

the three-language formula, I think that they are not prepared to give up English. When I plead to them to continue English as the official language and when they question the validity of it, I think that they are against it. Therefore, the whole thing, including your foreign policy, your economic policy, your language policy, is all what is called mixed. You have a mixed economy, non-alignment and a mixture in linguistic passions.

Mixture is a very general term. What is happening today is not mixture, but adulteration. Adulteration is a crime especially so in the political field. And, therefore, I would request the Prime Minister to keep the status quo for some time, so that we can meet again and again. This is a problem which cannot be settled through one discussion. This is a problem which cannot be settled, as my friend who preceded me said, by the Chief Ministers alone. This is a problem in which human values and human passions have got everything to say. Therefore, keep English as the official language till we arrive at a proper solution. I asked my friend Mr Mani, why he wanted twenty years. He said : "We are not able to decide now, so twenty years are needed." I asked him a pertinent question and, I am repeating it here, when we are not prepared to decide it now, who are we to formulate the time-table for the future ? Either we decide it now, or leave it to be decided by the future generation. Perhaps Mr Mani thinks that twenty years hence this problem will not affect him, I want him to live for a little more than twenty years. There are others who say ten years, fifteen years. This is not a problem wherein you can print, as you print your railway guides. Even in respect of railway guides, the trains arrive and start hours after the stipulated time. Therefore, let us not stipulate any time. Let us continue English as the official language till we arrive at a proper solution. I want to talk about my part at this stage, though my friend Mr Akbar Ali Khan, wanted me to speak about it earlier. Till we arrive at a proper solution, the suggestion that the DMK offers is that all the fourteen languages be declared as national languages and be given the status of official language.

AKBAR ALI KHAN : It would be impossible to work. "It is impossible," my friend, Mr Akbar Ali Khan, says. I thought some months back, it was impossible to keep India one.

Therefore, we shall keep English as the official language till all the fourteen languages become the official languages of the

Union. As far as the link language even at that time is concerned, you can leave it to natural forces. I think even now, the propagation of Hindi has become effective through non-official agencies, rather than through official agencies. Leave it to the people and let them develop the language and make it conversant and if at that time due to the natural process, without the backing of the Government, people think that Hindi has to become the link language, it will first be the *de facto* link language and then the *de jure* link language.

P. L. KUREEL URF TALIB (*Uttar Pradesh*): Unless you decide to make it the *de jure* link language, how will it become the *de facto* link language?

That is lack of confidence in his own language. What I want to say is this. You should work in such a way that Hindi becomes the *de facto* link language before you think about making it the *de jure* link language in course of time. But I may plead with my friend, Mr Vajpayee, and say that if he were to learn Tamil and drink deep into the nectar of Tamil classics he will select Tamil alone as the link language.

Therefore, till such time we should not disturb the present status quo of keeping English as the official language till we arrive at a stage when all the fourteen national languages become the official languages. Perhaps multilingualism is the price that we have to pay for keeping India one and united. You can have India disunited through Hindi. But if you want to have a contented India, if you want to have an India which does not feel that one region will dominate over another, if you do not want genuine apprehension to get into the minds and hearts of millions of people, if you want an India about which everyone of us could be proud, you will have to take into consideration the problem of multilingualism. When I said that, my friend Mr Akbar Ali Khan stated that it is impracticable. It is, of course, cumbersome. It is difficult, but the difficulties are not insurmountable. If Switzerland can make it a practical proposition to have four or five languages, I think arithmetically, we can have fourteen. Therefore, when Switzerland has surmounted the difficulty, are we so poverty-stricken to find out ways and methods? I find very able men here to surmount any difficulty. And if you feel that to surmount the difficulties help from our party is needed, we are prepared to offer that. I do not think that you will need it, but if you even pretend that you need it, we are prepared to offer

it, because multilingualism is not a fad. Multilingualism, is a resolution passed by the DMK. Do not be afraid of it. Do not think that it is anathema. I find last week, that Shri Sri Prakasa, who was once the Governor of our State, has pleaded for multilingualism and he has given a pertinent argument also. He has said that after having had linguistic States you cannot escape the consequences and, therefore, he has pleaded for multilingualism. Let us have multilingualism, till all these languages rise up to that level. Tamil, I announced, has already risen to that level. Well, we have my friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta to say Bengali also has risen to that. When we arrive at that stage in 1970 let us discard English. When we arrive at that stage in 1980, let us discard English. Therefore, the DMK's plea for the continuance of English as the official language is not due to the fact that we are enamoured of the English language. We are a very proud people as far as language is concerned.

We think that no language can stand comparison to Tamil.

D. L. SEN GUPTA (*West Bengal*) : Except Bengali.

Along with Bengali.

Our Home Minister talking in this House the other day said : " Oh, I am not a Hindiwalla. My mother-tongue is Punjabi and then I adopted Gujarati as my language. Now I am converted to Hindi." Unfortunately, we do not have such experiences. It is a very good experience to have a mother-tongue, to get another adopted tongue, and then to plead for a third tongue. You yourself have stated, that you are cut off from your moorings. Fortunately or unfortunately we are not cut off from our moorings. I can never forget that I have got a hoary language called Tamil. I will never be satisfied till that language in which my forefathers spoke, in which my poets have given sermons and scriptures, in which we have got classics and literature of inexhaustible knowledge, I will never be content till that day when Tamil takes its due place as one of the official languages in the Union.

N. PATRA (*Orissa*) : Then why do you hang on to English ?

When I find that I plead for Tamil, I do not forfeit the right of my friend, Mr Vajpayee, to plead for Hindi. As a matter of fact I will go to the length of saying that I have been listening to the speeches in Hindi here, and the minimum number of English words in Hindi speeches, is in Mr Vajpayee's speech. In other speeches I find Hindi being given a charitable sprinkling.

This is not Hindi. If I were to plead for Hindi, I would not make Hindi so poverty-stricken. Therefore, I will say, be enthusiastic about Hindi ; my friend, Mr Nanda, cannot be enthusiastic, he perhaps will take to Esperanto. But we have got a language of our own and therefore we plead that our language should find a place in the official languages list of this Union. Till that time, English should continue so that there may not be injustice, intentional or unintentional. However careful we are, there is a genuine apprehension in the minds of people, that Hindi-knowing people want to dominate over other people. Others have argued that we can very easily learn Hindi because we have learnt English so well. I would plead before the august House to visualise the future when my children, I should say, when my grandchildren, will be learning Hindi alphabets and muttering Hindi phrases.

Children of the Hindi-speaking areas, will be learning by heart sonnets and stanzas of Hindi from their parents. You learn Hindi through a thousand ways, in your fields and factories, in your homes and hovels, in every avocation, in every walk of life. You learn Hindi not by going through books but by merely being born there. What you inherit you want us to learn and you want us to have a handicap race. Only the Romans had the handicap race. The Roman satraps sat in the arena, asked the gladiators to go bare-handed and fight ferocious beasts, and some of them did, like my friend, Mr Satyanarayana. But other gladiators were torn to pieces by the wild beasts. What have we done to merit such treatment ? Why is it that you imbibe a language and wants us to learn it and compete with you ? Therein lies the injustice. It is an injustice which even most of the Hindi enthusiasts in calmer moments, will never contemplate. Therefore, let us be just, fair, friendly and let us above all be democratic.

I find from the papers that the passions of Hindi-speaking people have gone to such an extent, as to question the very motive, the very statements of people coming from our parts. I find from the papers that some gentleman has said that not only Mr Anna-durai, but Mr Kamaraj himself ought to be put into prison, because he is against Hindi. There are others who are passing very uncharitable remarks about the offered resignation of my friend, Mr Subramaniam. You do not know, you cannot imagine, what a thrill of hope his resignation had in Tamil Nad, during those troublesome times. If anybody has saved the good name of the Tamil Nad Congress, not fully but to a certain extent, it was Mr Subramaniam

and also Mr Alagesan. I do not have any love or affection for him. I have crossed swords with him many a time and he has hit me below the belt many a time. But what I want to say is that such gestures taken at the appropriate moment assuage the feelings of the people there. In the Assamese language riot, I find rioting going on day after day and at the same time peace brigades going from village to village asking people, appealing to the people to give up violence. Why is it that the Chief Minister did not take us into his confidence? And for that, the Central Home Minister, Mr Nanda, has paid a tribute: "He stood like a rock." Mr Bhaktavatsalam stood like a rock indeed, immovable, not moving, with no feeling, he was stony, he stood like a rock when all around him there was weeping and wailing and shooting, when widows wept for their fallen husbands, when mothers wept for their sons who were shot down dead. Do you want such stony men? Tamil Nad has got better men. If you say that he stood like a rock, I will even have to doubt your philosophy. I have been taught to believe that you have got a soft heart. I have been taught to believe that you are always in the company of sadhus and sanyasis. If that learning, if that training makes you praise a Chief Minister who is stony of heart, who has caused 50 or 60 men, seven-year-old girls, eight-year-old boys, eighty-year-old men, etc. to be shot down dead on the streets of Madras, well, I can only say that you are a bigger Bhaktavatsalam. So let not the Central Government think that law and order has been maintained. But I am all for maintenance of law and order and for curtailment of violence, but let us reopen this language issue and see to it that we arrive at a solution when English continues to be the official language, till we arrive at a stage when there will be multilingualism and any one of the Indian languages naturally takes the place of a link language.

Thank you.

4

The Economy

QUO VADIS ?

June 1962

Quo Vadis ? Whither goest though ? Anna asks this ancient question as a concerned Indian, who sees the country approaching a precipice. Speaking on the Finance (No. 2) Bill of 1962, he examines the economic progress achieved by the Government after 15 years of 'fleecing the people' in the name of the Plan. He questions the rationale of a tax structure which leans so heavily on indirect taxation, especially in a nation where 95% of the people live on the brink of starvation. He speaks feelingly of the utter lack of coordination between the Centre and the States. He speaks of disparities between the various regions of the country in the matter of development and the neglect of the Southern States by the Centre. He deplores the delay in developing Tuticorin in Tamilnadu as a major port.

Anna as Chief Minister of Tamilnadu succeeded in persuading the Government of India to take effective steps to develop Tuticorin as a major port. Though the Government of India ultimately accepted his other suggestion of giving tax concession and subsidies for the development of backward areas in the country, this was not done during Anna's lifetime. Fortunately, today, the country's attention is fully focussed more on regional disparities in development and the paramount need to reduce disparities in the minimum possible time. This was a cause dear to Anna's heart.

MADAM, Deputy Chairman, the Finance Bill has been discussed in the other House and is being discussed in this House. I have been hearing many good suggestions offered by Members on this side of the House, as well as on the other side. I come to understand on hearing the discussion, that nobody is satisfied with the way in which the people are being taxed. Whatever may be the arguments advanced for the necessity for fresh taxation, no section of this House or no section of the public outside is prepared to

bear any more burdens. Moreover, the fresh burden of taxation from the Centre has been preceded by the Railway Ministry and is soon to be pursued by the State Ministries. Therefore, the first impression that one gets on going through the Finance Bill is that the present Government, puzzled over their own failings, is asking the people to bear an unnecessary burden. The present Government is not able to offer an explanation for its failures, for its acts of commission and omission except to say that since it has got a Plan to be fulfilled, every burden ought to be borne by the people. When the critics ask them what the criterion of their planning is, whether their planning is going to be socialistic or otherwise, they say : " We are very good people ; we take bits from here and bits from there, mix them together and call it a mixed economy." Madam, you know that adulteration is a crime. And the Finance Minister was very vehement in attacking adulteration. In the other House he said that those people who were found to be guilty of adulteration should not only be whipped . . .

MORARJI R. DESAI : I did not say that. There was a suggestion that they should be flogged.

So, the Finance Minister is not willing even to punish them. But anyhow, adulteration is a crime and adulteration of economic principles is a crime for which the present and future generations have to pay. Therefore, I would like the present Government to formulate a policy which would conform to the norms of economics. But they want a new interpretation for any economic theory. Whenever it does not suit them, they take the old interpretation. Whenever it suits them, they say, " We are not doctrinaire, we are a very practical people." The whole trouble arises because this Government lacks a philosophy behind it. They want to steal the thunder from every political party functioning in this country. They want to steal the thunder from the Communist Party, they want to steal the thunder from the Swatantra Party, they want to steal the thunder from every other party and say, " There need be no other political party here, because we are socialists and we are capitalists, and we have got a mixed economy." Therefore, if there is a clear-cut exposition of the economic philosophy behind the implications of the present Government policy, the other parties can formulate their own philosophies. And the Hon. Mr Bhupesh Gupta was pointing out that there were groups inside the Congress, one group pulling towards the Right and another group pulling towards the Left, and he has stated very categorically that the

Communist Party would help the Leftist group to oust the Rightist group. I was sorry to hear Mr Bhupesh Gupta clubbing the present Finance Minister with the Rightist group which he wanted to shove off.

But may I point out that whatever the philosophy behind the fiscal policies, the bare fact remains that these changes in direct and indirect taxation taken together, will bring in a revenue of Rs. 71.7 crores in a whole year, of which Rs. 44.5 crores will be from indirect taxation and Rs. 27.2 crores from direct taxation. There is almost a stoic pleasure when the Finance Minister says that these proposals will bring in revenue. But he does not understand the feelings of the people when they are asked or forced to pay taxes which they cannot bear. And he points out philosophically enough that undoubtedly the richer section must carry an increasingly larger share of the taxation and that the poorer sections must benefit progressively more through development, and that that is part of their concept of a socialistic State. I would very much like the Finance Minister to substantiate both these statements. Is it that he has worked out his fiscal policy in such a way that the richer sections are carrying an increasingly larger share of the taxation and the poorer sections are getting the benefit out of it ? I would like to quote the opinion — I may even call it a stricture — of a member of the ruling Party itself.

He has stated that the whole fiscal policy followed by the Government of India has lessened the value of the rupee which is going down, that 95 per cent of the people are on a marginal or sub-marginal level of subsistence and that more money is getting concentrated in the hands of a few. If Members on this side were to say that the value of the rupee is going down, they will be accused of not knowing the full facts, but I have quoted the opinion expressed by the Hon. Mr T. T. Krishnamachari, Minister without Portfolio, who had to get out of Delhi because man-eaters were on the prowl. I hope that the man-eaters have now been chased or perhaps he may have come with a muzzle-gun. The fact remains that a responsible Member who has got a responsible post, Mr Krishnamachari — I say 'responsible' because he has not got any portfolio and, therefore, he has got all the portfolios — has stated that the value of the rupee is going down. Who is to be accused for the value of the rupee going down ? The ruling party members do not have even the courtesy to consult us when schemes are being formulated. But it is Mr Krishnamachari who is saying that the value of the rupee is going down and that 95 per

cent of the people are on a marginal or sub-marginal level, in spite of the fact that we have had a national Government for the past fifteen years conducted and directed by a political party which can command the funds of the capitalists and also the votes of the poor. And yet after having had two Five Year Plans and being in the middle of the Third Five Year Plan, this is the stricture that is being passed by an Hon. Member of this Cabinet.

May I ask the Finance Minister to point out whether this is the time to tax the people, especially to levy indirect taxes, when 95 per cent of the people are stated to be on a marginal or sub-marginal level of subsistence? Here again are the figures taken from the national sample survey (Agricultural Labour Enquiry), sponsored by the Government. It is stated that 27 million people have work for one hour a day, 20 million people have work for two hours a day, and forty five million for four hours a day, and at other times they have no work. We have been spending crores and crores of money which we have got from our people and from outside — loans and aids — yet, after 15 years of freedom and 12 years of planning, we find that 27 million people have work for one hour a day. How do we account for this state of affairs after having spent so much money on planning, after having practically fleeced the people for the sake of the Plans?

The other problems today are that our sterling balance has dwindled, our exports have fallen, aid from foreign countries is likely to be cut down, indirect taxation is on the increase, prices are rising, direct taxes are being evaded and black money is on the increase. And it is stated that Rs. 118 crores of income-tax is in arrears. May I ask the Finance Minister to point out, why such a colossal amount has been left uncollected? With what audacity can he come to the people and say that because of the Plans they have to pay the taxes? Why should he not take up cudgels against the income-tax arrears of Rs. 118 crores? If he had only taken sufficient care and sufficiently stringent measures to collect at least half of this sum of Rs. 118 crores, there would not have been any necessity for taxing the people. But he is not merely taxing the people for filling up that gap because he says right royally that these changes will bring in a revenue of Rs. 71 crores. Therefore, he has not a collector's mind, not the mind of a development officer of this sub-continent of ours.

My friend Mr Bhupesh Gupta, wanted to know the philosophy behind all these economic implications. The first charge that

I am emboldened to make is that because of the lack of a political philosophy you are leading the country blindfold into blind alleys, and therefore we do not know what would be the consequences of all these taxes. They have been saying that taxation and an increase in taxation, is an index of prosperity. I accept it as an index of prosperity, but it has to be answered, prosperity of whom, of which section ? That has not been answered. Therefore it is that the indirect taxes, especially on essential commodities ought to be curtailed, even though the Finance Minister has got the Finance Bill passed in the Lok Sabha. Even then, if the Finance Minister — he is reputed to be philosophically minded — were to take note of the criticisms advanced by Members of the ruling Party itself, he would see that nobody supported him in these new taxes. But then, their vote was got only by whipping them into submission. Therefore he has no moral right to levy these indirect taxes and he would be doing a great favour, not merely to the poor people, but to the philosophy to which he is stated to be wedded, if he takes the criticism offered by Members of his own ruling party into consideration.

And therein, Madam Deputy Chairman, I may be permitted to deviate for a short time into the strange and curious working of democracy in this country. Members of the ruling party, in both the Houses, offered criticisms against the ruling party's new taxation measures, in as vehement a manner as Members on this side. Yet when they go outside, they are forced to defend the present Government and according to the whip issued, they have to vote for the Government. Presently, this month, the Communist Party, the Jana Sangh, the Swatantra Party and the Party to which I have the honour to belong — each one of us separately — are organising protest meetings against excessive taxation. When we address the masses about the impracticability of these taxes, about how these taxes are going to undermine the poverty-stricken people still further, it is these same Congress Members, Members of the ruling party, who are going to come and defend the Government. But do not think that the people will accept your words. People do not merely read the reports about what it said outside this House to defend their case. They also read what is said inside this House. That is why I am very glad that Members of the ruling party have spoken very correctly and very boldly in attacking the indirect taxation policies of the Finance Minister. The Finance Minister may turn round and say, "But I will have to get the money."

One way of getting money, if I may say so, is to collect the income-tax arrears, find out the evaders and get all the loopholes plugged. But I am not going to repeat what my Hon. friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, was saying, because you may not digest it. I would say that even in your present set-up, if you economise the various departments of the administration, if you plug the loopholes in the various administrative sections, you can find enough money for carrying on the administration and even to implement the Plan. But whenever we from this side say that the administration is lopsided that there is corruption and nepotism in this administration, Members of the Cabinet turn round and say, "Prove it." As the Hyderabad Economy Committee Report points out :

"Corruption, it is said, is often difficult to prove. All the more reason why there should not be the least hesitation in investigating every matter in which there is ground for complaint."

Mr Gorwala, whom the Government themselves commissioned to report on the reforms to be carried out in public administration, is pleased to state about the income-tax system in his report as follows :

"On the Income-tax side, the real complaint of the public is that while small men are often troubled quite unnecessarily, tax-evaders, whose assessment should run into lakhs, seem to escape. The failure of the Income-tax Investigation Commission to produce any real results and the ease with which the most blatant tax-evaders seem to be able to manage their affairs undisturbed has caused a very widespread belief in the impotence of Government when pitted against really influential and wealthy people."

The word used is, 'impotence' ; I would have thought twice before using such a strong word, but Mr Gorwala, because he had been commissioned by the Government to report on public administration, says 'impotence' of the Government. May I ask the Members of the Cabinet, what right have you to ask us to pay crores and crores of rupees when Mr Gorwala says that your Government is impotent ? Therefore I would like to see some more potency and vitality in the administrative set-up.

And here is another stricture and this is about the Commerce Ministry :

"The Commerce Ministry had gained an unenviable notoriety in respect of the amenability of some of its principal officials to the wishes of big business."

Perhaps this is what Mr T. T. Krishnamachari means by "man-eaters on the prowl." How he is able to come to the conclusion that man-eaters are on the prowl, I have not been able to understand unless I make a bold conjecture and say, that having been the Commerce Minister himself, he might have had some curious experiences. The Commerce Ministry is notorious for favouring big business in issuing licences. If these things are reformed, there will be what the Hon. Member preceding me had stated, some enthusiasm in the people for the Plan. But when the people find the taxes mounting, prices soaring, unemployment growing larger and larger in dimension, when they find that the present state of the Government is such that they cannot even provide the necessities of life, how do you expect the people to be enthusiastic about the Plans ? Of course, there are people who have got to say something in favour of this or that item in the fiscal policy of the Government. Apart from the fact that I belong to a party which demands separation of Dravida Nadu from India may I point out that the way in which you have planned out the industrial reorganisation will make it impossible to get the maximum output from the whole sub-continent. Economic activity has been lopsided, industrial organisation has been lopsided. It is only late in the day that the—

BHUPESH GUPTA : You give up your Dravida Nadu demand and we shall join you in fighting for more industries for Tamilnadu within the Republic of India. Let us have that deal. Will you have it ?

I am thankful to Shri Bhupesh Gupta for his anxiety to be with me, but I would not like to have him as an ally, giving up my ideal.

I was saying that it is only late in the day that the Government have come to realise that their policy of industrialisation has been lopsided. They are now using an economic policy behind which there are many political philosophies the meaning of which most of them do not divulge fully. They are talking about regional, economic reconstruction. They say that particular regions are today economically advanced and therefore it is the policy of the Government of India, as far as industries are concerned, to give more attention to the neglected parts of the country as a whole. Therefore, it means that all these twelve years of planning, you have had a defective planning, a lopsided economic planning.

The other day the Hon. Member, Shrimati Devaki (Gopidas), when she was giving a very lucid account of how Kerala is being

left out in matters of development, stated that when plans are formulated, the special features and special standards of the Kerala State ought to be taken into consideration and remedies found out, otherwise it will be a thorn in the further development of the Indian Union. This statement comes from one who believes that India should remain one and indivisible. If you do not take into consideration the special standards or the special features of Kerala, Kerala would remain a thorn.

Here, Madam Deputy Chairman, I would, through you, ask the Hon. Mr Bhupesh Gupta to pay attention to this : "It will be a thorn in the further development of the Indian Union," she says. What do we do with thorns ? We take them away. That is what we do. If there is a thorn in the body politic, or in the body what we do is, we take away the thorn.

Therefore Madam, even people who have an abiding faith in the Indian unity think that if the particular region in which they live, remains industrially disorganised, the problem of unity will remain unsolved.

BHUPESH GUPTA : I think your separation movement would weaken the democratic movement in Tamilnad and it will spoil the case of Tamilnad. It would neither bring what you want — which of course, we do not want — nor will it bring industrialisation to that part.

To Mr Bhupesh Gupta's advice I will pay very serious attention. We will try to be as democratic as possible.

What I am trying to formulate is, that there is a very real grievance in the minds of members of every political party that there is a regional disparity. I am pointing out this, not for separation, but because of the fact that due to lopsided growth we have not brought out the maximum output that this country could give. That is my point.

For separation I have got other reasons, but I would not deviate into that even though one Hon. Member deviated into it and delightfully asked me to go to Ceylon to propagate it. I do not know whether he is more attached to me or to Ceylon. He has however admitted that he is a Dravidian. I may say categorically, that neither cannons nor contempt is going to deter me from the mission to which I am wedded. About that there can be no compromise.

From the economic point of view, to prove that there is regional disparity I am giving you a very delightful fact. I was talking about

the income-tax arrears. It has been given State-wise or circle-wise. Bombay City-1 and Bombay City-2 and Bombay Central account for Rs. 36 crores and West Bengal, Calcutta town, accounts for Rs. 43 crores. Therefore, the Finance Minister should get his gun towards these two regions, wherein blocks of money remain unpaid.

BHUPESH GUPTA : West Bengal has big capitalists. Mr Shanti Prasad Jain bought a house recently for Rs 60 lakhs.

Most of the capital of West Bengal is from outside. The economic disparity is being proved by statistics of State-wise distribution of income from agriculture. In Madras we have got in 1958-59 Rs. 343.3 crores whereas in Uttar Pradesh it is Rs 1,146 crores and in West Bengal it is Rs. 427 crores. I do not grudge U.P. or West Bengal's becoming rich and wealthy. But may I point out that if there had not been this lopsided economic arrangement during these Plans, we would have been getting very much more than even Uttar Pradesh in the matter of agriculture. Even now, the yield per acre in Tamil Nad is the highest in the whole of India, though we do not have many irrigation programmes, and we do not have a Bhakra Nangal or even many smaller schemes.

S. CHANNA REDDY (*Andhra Pradesh*) : You have the Kunda Dam.

That is more for power than for irrigation purposes. So without all that we are able to increase our output per acre. If such sturdy, intelligent and understanding agriculturists are to be found there, is it not the duty of the planners to apply their eyes more to the South with regard to planning the agricultural sector ? They could have developed the fishing industry in the South. They could have developed the transport industry in the Southern area. There are so many other things that can be done. There are so many opportunities. They have not only missed those opportunities, but have been shelving the issue wherever an issue like this was raised. When such issues were raised, they used to say, "There is a strict economic principle that industries can be established only if the raw materials are to be found there." But they have now come round to recognise the principle that regional disparities should be done away with once and for all. For the information of the House I may say, that the very same problem arose in Italy. Southern Italy was industrially very backward compared to Northern Italy and then the Italian Government took very intelligent, very

bold and very radical steps formulating a special scheme for Southern Italy. They offered tax concessions for new Industries to be started in Southern Italy. They gave loans and other aids for this purpose in order to improve this part of Italy. I am not leading you on to the tempting ground where you can rise up and say we will follow that example. You may follow it. I do not ask you not to follow it. Do follow it. But I should not, I cannot and I need not guarantee, that my political party will give up its philosophy because of that. Its philosophy is quite apart from such compromises or such subsidies. I am only pointing out that if the economics of the South had been taken into consideration, we could have produced more wealth by this time. I may point out that the sea-coast in the South is one of the best in the whole world. There are many ports, used and unused, and I hope my Hon. friend Mr Dahyabhai Patel will not come to grips with me when I say that he has got Kandla Port and yet we have not got our Tuticorin. Two days back the Industries Minister of our State, while addressing the Merchants' Chamber at Tuticorin stated that it is not enough to accept the proposal. The Government of India should move in the matter to get things done. Therefore, I say if at least economic reorganisation had been carried out throughout the country, especially in the neglected South, then the demand to pay taxes would not have been felt to be so heavy. Therefore it is that the South especially, finds itself being taxed too much for the benefit not of its own territory, but for some other territory and so the tax-pang comes as a double dose. It is our request to the Finance Minister and through him to other Ministries that they should find out how they could reorganise or reconstruct the South economically so that more wealth may be produced and less taxation be indulged in.

There is another erroneous impression that is being created by the Members of the ruling Party. They say : " Do not ask for distribution of the profits now. You go on producing. It is your duty to produce. So produce more and more. But do not talk about distribution now, because distribution comes only after production." Let me add that only in economics books does production come in the first, and distribution in the second chapter. But in actual practice, while you produce you distribute. You do not go on producing and then pile up all the goods and one fine morning come and say : " Now we shall have distribution." That is not the way in which economic activities are to be conducted.

That is only the way in which economic books should be written. Therefore, the Members of the ruling Party should not trot out such a weak argument. We on this side say that which is being produced is not being properly distributed. If the goods had been properly distributed, if there had been proper distribution of wealth, there would not have been so much poverty in this country of ours. Our distribution is such that in my State, old men and old women who are destitute are to be pensioned off by the State. I am glad that my State Government has got such a proposal. But that is an index of the destitution to be found in the country. Why is it that after producing so much wealth we find so much of poverty ? It is because the question of distribution has not been paid enough heed. That is why there is wealth produced and we find newer and newer cadillacs and newer and newer bungalows and newer and newer business houses. I read the other day in the papers that even the Prime Minister was astounded to find that when the Government is not able to get cement, private contractors are able to get cement in any quantity. I would say — I do not know whether it is too strong a word to be used — it is very shameful for a national government to find these two words current — blackmarket and black money. We are using these words in a casual manner. When speaking of any article, we ask : what is its price in the open market and what is its price in the blackmarket ? I was astounded to read in another paper that one of the Cabinet Ministers, not the present Minister for Steel, once stated that he was well conversant with the blackmarket price of steel. Therefore, it is clear that the Government knows that there is this blackmarket, and the Government knows also how the blackmarket is being conducted. The Government, however, also knows that to book these blackmarket people will work havoc in their elections. Therefore, blackmarketeters are being allowed to flourish. When there is the blackmarket, there is also black money and this black money cannot be ploughed back into industry. When a private concern gets profit in the open it can bring it out and reinvest it in the business. But when they get black money which is not capable of being accounted for, they cannot bring it out, or put it into the industry. Therefore it goes into ostentatious living. It was with a view to curtail that ostentatious living that the other Finance Minister thought of the expenditure tax. But the present Finance Minister perhaps thinks that this ostentatious living has gone down, or that ostentation is good. He has taken away this

expenditure tax. It might not have yielded much revenue. I find from the papers that it bagged only Rs. 77 lakhs. But whatever be the amount, the social value behind that tax has significance and yet it has been taken away. On the other hand, taxes on kerosene, match-boxes and tobacco are being increased more and more and the other day in the Lok Sabha the Finance Minister flourished a match box and said : " Here is a match box and I got it at the correct price." I would now ask him to get the match boxes. Now, the price of a match box has gone up and the price of everything has gone up because even though the Finance Minister, like King Canute, has stated that prices would not rise, neither the waves stood silent before Canute, nor the prices before the Finance Minister. Therefore, whenever there are taxes, prices are bound to go up and if at least the Government is capable of controlling price rise, then it has got not a reason but an apology for excise taxation or these indirect taxes. The Finance Bill is a fleecing Bill. I can understand fleecing rams and sheep for weaving blankets, but you are fleecing men, you are fleecing the poor people and you are fleecing the people in the name of the Plan, you are making the people look with horror at the Plan. Whenever you say that because of the Plan all these taxes are being levied, they not only condemn the taxes, but begin to doubt the very necessity for a Plan. In a way, you are undermining the planning system, of which you have been a votary yourself. I would ask the Finance Minister not to advance arguments, intelligent logic, sandwiched with statistics but to take into consideration the poverty-stricken people, their plight, their unemployment, etc. Their taxable capacity has been reached and therefore, you should take away the indirect taxes, especially on essential commodities and try to get money from elsewhere, but I can assure you that even if these taxes are taken away, he is going to get more money because whenever he presents a Budget, the estimate is always given on a lower scale so that afterwards he can come up, stand before Parliament like a conjurer and say, " I expected only Rs. 23 crores but I got Rs. 32 crores." Therefore, I say, there is no necessity for such indirect taxation to fleece the people.

DEBACLE ON THE FOOD FRONT

September 1964

Speaking on the motion regarding the food situation, Anna makes a penetrating analysis of the subject. He says that the food problem is an amalgam of many problems, the three main aspects of which are production, distribution and control of prices. Among the road blocks for increased production, he highlights the failure of the land reforms. He points out the need to ensure that incentive prices declared by Government do not remain in the hands of a few Landlords but should trickle down to the actual tillers of the soil. He urges on the need to concentrate on reducing the cost of cultivation to the farmer by reducing the price of fertilizers, seeds and land revenue, as far as uneconomic holdings are concerned. With the insight of a shrewd economist he finds out the pitfalls in setting up the proposed Foodgrains Corporation and highlights the need for handling the distribution in a sympathetic and human way with a view to benefiting the producers as opposed to the middle men. He urges the Government to take over the grain trade as a whole and not try to handle part of the trade and warns the Government that "just as the landlords have beaten the Government in the game of land reforms, these grain dealers will beat the Government in this game, unless the entire grain trade is taken over and controlled by the Government." He also urges the need to remember the paramount interest of the consumer in fixing fair prices for foodgrain.

Most of the problems on the food front highlighted by Anna in his speech remain with us. One of the factors for the massive victory of the DMK Party in the 1967 General Elections was the debacle on the food front in the then Madras State. The administrative bunglings was so colossal that a few weeks before the general elections, most of the ration shops in major urban areas in the city had no rice to distribute. One of the important promises the DMK Party made in 1967 before they came to power was to do justice to the consumer by selling rice at Re. 1 a measure.

SIR, the motion before this House presented by the Hon. Minister, is couched in such colourless language that it shows the astuteness of the present Food Minister. He has asked us to consider the present food situation without taking us into his confidence as to why the present food situation has deteriorated and what were the steps that were taken for stemming it. And he has also given certain assurances and certain promises which were offered in plenty by his predecessors. Of course, the present Food Minister succeeds to a seat which has been occupied by equally alert, equally able, and equally vigorous Food Ministers. The Food Minister would himself admit that they have been experienced colleagues. And what were the factors that went into the failure of the food front? A probe ought to have taken place on this, and the House ought to have been taken into confidence about the failure on the food front. Of course, many Hon. Members of this House stood up to pay sweet praises to the Food Minister, and the Food Minister himself has stated that he would look into the matter and see that this riddle—or is it a muddle—is settled once and for all. He is only asking this House to show the green signal. He says, “Give me the signal. Off I go and off goes all the evil on the food front.” I am very glad indeed that sweet sentiments have been expressed by Hon. Members and I am elated too when I hear a Member from my own State and my own personal friend repeating the many sweet sentiments expressed here. But I do not propose myself to succumb to the temptation of singing a sweet song in praise of his head or heart. As a matter of fact, I am going to ask him certain blunt questions. I would like to know whether the present Food Minister is enunciating a new policy or whether he is announcing the present and the future activities of the administrative wing. I would like to ask the Food Minister whether he realises and admits failures on the food front for the past so many years. If he thinks that this House will be satisfied with only assurances, I can assure him that such sweet assurances were given by his predecessors and I am certain that he cannot beat his predecessors in the art of giving promises to the House and to the country. His predecessors, the Food Ministers, have stated in very emphatic terms :

“For the first time after many years we have found an atmosphere where we are not afraid that worse days are ahead. In fact, it is an atmosphere of self-confidence.”

“We have laid a very stable foundation of a self-sustaining and self-developing agricultural economy.”

Through you, Mr Chairman, I would ask the present Food Minister to note the words “stable foundation of a self-sustaining and self-developing agricultural economy”. I would like to know what has become of the stable foundation. Has it not been shattered, or was there no stable foundation except in the imagination of the Minister? And if that stable foundation has not been shattered, there would not have been any need for the present Food Minister to discard his previous portfolio and take over the present portfolio. It was the Hon. Mr S. K. Patil, when he was taking over the Food Portfolio who said that he had laid a very stable foundation. What has become of that foundation? I would like to know. Perhaps, the Ministers being members of the ruling Party, may argue, because of natural calamities like floods, locusts and droughts, what can any Minister do? But the Hon. Shri S. K. Patil who announced that he had laid a very stable foundation also said :

“There were unprecedented floods in some parts of India, continued droughts for several weeks in other parts and the visitation of locusts once or twice ; in spite of all that, our foodgrain produce has increased.”

And he has assured us :

“If my policies succeed, I shall not import foodgrain after three years.”

He had stated it in 1961, and had assured the country through this House that he would stop the import of foodgrains after three years. I would like to know what has become of that stable foundation. Unless we find out what the reasons are for the shattering of that foundation, we cannot solve the food problem by mere assurances.

My friend, the Food Minister, has also stated or requested that politics should not be imported into the food problem. Yes Sir, politics ought not to be imported not only into the food problem, but into all the measures that are to be undertaken by the Food Ministry, by the machinery that he proposes to build, by the methods of implementation which he has got in mind. I would like to know from the Minister what exactly he means by “importing politics into the food front”? Is the Food Ministry headed by an accredited economist? Are all the plans that are formulated by the Food Minister or the Food Ministry devoid of

political or party sentiments ? May I say that the present debacle is, to a very large extent, due to the fact that party politics has been imported into almost all the activities of the agricultural, cooperative and community centre spheres, in all those place where the ruling party holds sway, which means throughout India ? And it is because of the import of party politics into all these spheres that we find that although all these plans look very good on paper, when they are implemented, we do not get the maximum benefit from these projects. This House may not be interested in knowing the details, but I can assure this House, through you, Sir, that I am taking the fullest responsibility for proving that party politics has entered into all these activities. Last month, while I was touring the Salem district, I found the President of a major Panchayat Board making a public complaint that when a Congress Minister was touring that sector, the Panchayat Board President invited him to come to his particular panchayat so that he might place certain facts before him, and so that he could get some enlightenment on vital matters. And this House will be surprised to know that the Minister refused to comply with the request, not for lack of time due to his multifarious national activities, but simply because the President of the Panchayat Board happened to be a member of another political party, not of the DMK, but of the Communist Party, and even among the Communist Party, a member of my Hon. friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta's Party. Is that not importing politics into every sphere of activity ?

The Minister is of course too intelligent to give his real motive. He said that he had no time. But he had time to go to other places. I would give you another instance. The Agriculture Department is interested in maintaining panchayat fruit gardens. A friend of mine, a member of my Party, happens to be the President of a panchayat. He is maintaining a fruit garden. When that Minister was invited to visit that fruit garden, though that fruit garden is considered to be the best in that particular sector, the Minister had no time. It is very curious that he cannot find time whenever members of the Opposition parties request him to come.

There are co-operative spheres wherein members of all parties are eager to enter, but the members of parties other than the ruling party are not allowed to enter. So I would say, that the advice administered to us, should be a two-way traffic and not a one-way traffic.

Sir, if politics or party politics is not imported into the food problem and allied problems, I think extra energy can be mobilised for increase in food production.

Now, Sir, I would like to look into this problem of food scarcity. I would like to have it analysed so that we can find out what the best way of solving this question is because the food problem is, after all, an amalgam of various other problems and each one of these problems differs from one another. For instance, one aspect of the food problem is increase in production. Another aspect of the food problem is the distribution of what is produced. And the third aspect is how best to hold the price line.

Sir, only in economics does distribution come after production. In actual practice, distribution and production are simultaneous processes. We do not produce and then wait for some time and begin to distribute. So also there is another misconception, that people can be divided into producers and consumers. Producers are consumers and consumers are producers. There can be, of course, some margin. But we cannot altogether divide society into two water-tight compartments of producers and consumers.

Sir, if we take, first of all, the problem of increased production, I would charge this Government with having made the land reforms legislation a dismal failure. When the people of the various political parties have been pressing for this land reform, they expected that it would revolutionize society on the agricultural front, they thought that their children would get a fair deal, that there would not be concentration of land in the hands of the few. Yet the way this land legislation has been carried out, has landed us in fresh difficulties.

Sir, an unbiased American study team visiting one of the agricultural centres in my State, has issued a statement very recently that the implications of the land legislation have not been properly understood by even the officials that, there is concentration of land in the hands of a few individuals, that there is absentee-landlordism, that there are gentlemen farmers who sit in their town villas asking agricultural labourers to carry on the tilling operations. Hence the graveness of the charge, that this Government has failed to implement in a socialistic way, the land legislation and allied reforms. And I need not quote the strictures of the Americans, because my friend, Mr Bhupesh Gupta, would be worried that I am importing American stuff. We have got our own stuff. The Finance Minister, Mr T. T. Krishnamachari,

has stated very recently, that on this point he has been beaten by the big landlord. He has stated very categorically that assuredly the land legislation has been defective. We have been defeated in this game by the big landlord. Sir, why is it that the big landlords have beaten us ? Why is it that we do not retaliate ? Why is it that we allow the landlords to beat us ? Is it because their lash is dipped in gold needed so much for election purposes ? If only we had implemented the land legislation in a proper, radical and revolutionary way till now, production would have gone to stupendous heights.

We talk about farmers, we talk about peasant proprietors. I know there are peasant proprietors in the district from which the Hon. Minister comes, the Coimbatore district and the Salem district. There the peasant proprietors take pleasure and pride in being on the spot, in being actual cultivators. But there are other States, other places where there is still the phenomenon of peasant-landlordism, of gentleman-farmers. And, therefore, when we talk of incentive price for improving production, we should see that it goes to the actual tillers who carry on the agricultural operations. It is not enough to declare an incentive price, a remunerative price and then allow that remunerative price and that margin, to remain in the hands of a few magnates for none can deny that the ruling Party today is being bossed over on the mental level by magnates. I would like the ruling party to publish the names of the bigwigs of their membership, with their economic status and their political attitude. And if they publish that, that itself would be an added weight to my argument. It is because the ruling party is aligned with the landed magnates that these reforms which have been announced as revolutionary reforms, have not yielded the best results. If an incentive price or a remunerative price is being given, the margin of profit should not be pocketed by the landlords themselves but should go to the agricultural labourers. Just a few minutes ago, when a Member asked whether there is any scheme for improving the lot of the agricultural labourers, the Minister was pleased to state that there is no particular scheme, but all those schemes which are adumbrated for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, will apply to them also. That is the way in which the present Government is looking at the agriculturists. Unless the lot of the agriculturists is bettered, they cannot get two meals, where there is one now. They cannot get him that extra energy that is needed, that extra energy which is

more powerful than your fertilisers, that extra energy which will make him feel, "I work and I live. I labour and I get the product, I am working in the fields and my life is comfortable." Unless the agricultural labourer is made to feel that measures taken on the food front are going to help him also, unless you take that step, you cannot find a solution on the plane of this agricultural food production. Therefore, I would like to know the methods by which they are going to fix the remunerative prices or the price incentives. I find, wading through the debates of previous years, that almost all the Ministers who have preceded the present Food Minister have also stated that they were going to give incentive price, remunerative price, fair price — they used many other phrases. In fact Mr Patil went to the extent of saying : " Hereafter the price structure is going to be producer-oriented rather than consumer-oriented." I would like to know how you are going to fix the price. If the Minister had taken us into his confidence to find out the methods of tabulating the cost of production, the margin that the producer should get, the margin that the trader should get, the margin that the middle-man is to get, if he had taken us into his confidence in these details, then of course we could have offered certain suggestions and the debates could have yielded much benefit to him.

About food production, they say that they are going to put in extra energy to see that food production increases very much. For that, they are saying they are going to give incentive price to the farmer. But I would like to point out that the monetary value or amount given to the farmer is not as important as a reduction in the cost of cultivation. Any farmer wants a reduction in the cost of cultivation. There ought to be a reduction in the price of fertilisers. There ought to be a reduction in the price offered for good seeds and there also ought to be a reduction in land revenue so far as uneconomic holdings are concerned. Therefore, I would request this Government to enthuse the farmer first by assuring him that there would be no land revenue up to five acres. If you give such sort of incentives, the farmer will get enthused and he will put in extra energy.

Another item that this Government should take into consideration, is that more fertilisers are being used by the producers. I am glad to inform this House, that of all the States, Madras State depends on fertilisers to a very great extent. I find that the amount spent by a Madras farmer, by a Tamil Nad farmer, on

farm manure is the highest. Therefore if there ought to be more production, increased production, then there ought to be a reduction in the price of fertilisers. But the Minister might say : " We do not have enough fertilisers, we have to import them and therefore we cannot reduce the prices." But this is what the Public Accounts Committee is saying :

" Prices had deliberately been kept high with a view to making profits. This, the Committee regret to point out, was not consistent with the objects of the pool which was never intended to be a revenue-earning scheme. In the circumstances, such a wide margin of profit (Rs. 86.8 per metric tonne in 1961-62) could by no means be justified — a sort of indirect taxation which was the prerogative of Parliament only. Besides, this defeated the basic concept of establishing the pool which was to make the fertilisers available to the cultivators at reasonable rates in the interests of maximising agricultural production."

Therefore, the strictures of the PAC show beyond doubt that on the fertiliser front, the Government has been following an unsympathetic attitude for increasing food production. I would like to know whether in his anxiety to increase food production the Minister is taking into consideration the reduction in the price of fertilisers also, because unless there is reduction in the price of fertilisers, the farmers cannot go on purchasing fertilisers and so long as there is no fertiliser at reasonable prices, there would be a reduction in food production.

Another item that I would like to know is this. The Food Minister has formulated a scheme that he is going to have a Foodgrains Corporation. I welcome that project. In fact I have had occasion to write to him that we the DMK, are one with him in the formulation of a Foodgrains Corporation but he has not enlightened this House about either the structure or the method by which it is going to function. That was why an Hon. Member from this side after a speech stated that he was reserving his opinion about the Foodgrains Corporation till it actually starts functioning. I have pointed out the various schemes which were adumbrated by his predecessors. We seem to think that whenever a Minister comes forward with any proposal, that proposal is the one that is needed for solving the problem. When land levy and procurement were proposed, we stood up to say : " Yes, that is the best method of solving the food problem." When we had the Food Zones

created, we were ready to support it and say that by forming the Food Zones, we were going to feed the deficit areas through the surplus areas. When State trading was adumbrated, we said : "The food problem is now solved." When buffer stocks were mentioned, we said : "By building up the buffer stocks, we are going to solve the problem once and for all." When Mr S. K. Patil went to America — I ought to have said, visited America — and when he returned to India, with P. L. 480, we said : "Now at least the food problem is solved." That is why I say that we should not take any project or policy or scheme adumbrated by the Minister at its face value. He should explain certain details. Of course, he can withhold some information in the public interest but he should tell us the broad features of this programme because from previous experience, as far as State trading in foodgrains is concerned, I find again from the Estimates Committee that in 1960-61 there were Rs. 88.48 lakhs lost in transit, in 1961-62 it was Rs. 79.57 lakhs and in 1962-63 it was Rs. 207.74 lakhs lost in transit. Whether we increase food production or not, we seem to be very alert in increasing production in these kinds of losses. As regards storage loss, in 1960-61 it was Rs. 6.43 lakhs, and in 1962-63 it was Rs. 23.02 lakhs. I would like to know whether proper safeguards have been taken by the present Food Minister, to see that the proposed Foodgrains Trading Corporation will not land us into all these difficulties.

Another point that I would like to know from the Food Minister is whether the Foodgrains Trading Corporation is to be a body working on the maximum 'no profit, no loss', or whether it is going to be merely a commercial body. If the Foodgrains Trading Corporation is merely to replace the grains traders, and if they are going to take a margin of profit just as the grain traders are taking, I do not think we can have a reduction in the prices, because the overall expenditure of any Government machinery is bound to be higher than the overall cost of any private machinery. The private traders have got various methods, some of them dubious, some of them illegal and some of them not to be encouraged — I admit. In any case, their cost of machinery is less than the overall cost of Governmental machinery. I would request the Food Minister to see that the proposed Foodgrains Trading Corporation is worked on a no-loss basis. But he has in ambiguous terms said : "It will be a commercial organisation," and it is due to the fact that there are various commercial organisations having various

commercial ethics, that we are having these increased prices. Therefore, when my friend, the Food Minister, stated that this Foodgrains Corporation is to be a commercial organisation, I was wondering whether he was after all becoming the biggest grain-trader. I would not like the present Government to become the biggest grain trader only ; I would like them to handle grain, but then I would like them to see that the margin between what they pay to the producer and what they charge to the consumer is less than what the grain traders are charging. Unless the people realise that the Foodgrains Trading Corporation is handling the food situation in a more human way than the grain traders, we would have created another Governmental organisation which would need another probe, perhaps another Public Accounts Committee Report, another Estimates Committee Report and another debate here. I would not like newer and newer organisations of the Government to spring up unless they have got a purpose behind them, and this Foodgrains Trading Corporation I take it, has a purpose behind it.

There is every necessity that people ought not to be tossed about this way and that by the whims and fancies of grain traders. Food is the most basic necessity, and if people are tossed between the profit motive of private producers and others, then they are not going to get that extra energy which is needed for production on other fronts because, though the agricultural producer is a producer, there are others who do not produce agricultural commodities, but they are producing also, producing other commodities. That is why I was saying that the differentiation between producers and consumers was illusive, because producers do consume things, and consumers do produce things. So those who are called consumers, unless they produce agricultural implements at cheaper rates, and give them at cheaper rates to the agriculturists, cannot expect the agricultural producer to produce food in a greater quantity. Therefore, they are interlinked and we cannot look at the problem of food only from a particular angle. It is, as I said, an amalgam of many problems put together, and in that connection I would like that the policy of the Government is that there ought not to be too many changes in the Food Ministry; not that I wish that a Minister should continue for all time to come, but when a particular Minister adumbrates a new scheme, he should be allowed to remain in his seat to formulate the scheme, work it out and then stand up and say to the House and to the country, that during his tenure of

office he chalked out a scheme, built up a machinery for it and carried it out. I am particularly apprehensive because my very good friend, the present Food Minister, before he became the Food Minister, was handling another portfolio from where he gave out sweet promises. I am very sure he chalked out policies and programmes also for the Salem steel plant, and just when we were hoping to get it from him he had been asked to go over to the food front. I am very glad that the present Government has placed such high confidence in my friend to handle one of the most delicate portfolios. But if the previous method of shifting a Minister so soon after he formulates a scheme to another portfolio is adopted here also, we might perhaps find Minister Mr Subramaniam handling Education and Cultural Affairs next year, whereas his successor may be saying : " Well, the Foodgrains Corporation adumbrated by the Government is being looked into." I do not want such a thing to happen here. I am saying that because the scheme that he has presented, the Foodgrains Trading Corporation, is the most delicate machinery that any Government can handle. Therefore I would request that the man who has given this idea should be asked to translate that idea into action, and he should be kept in the Food portfolio so that we can have the Foodgrains Corporation worked out with this clarification, that the proposed Foodgrains Corporation should be on a no-profit no-loss basis. There should not be too much officialdom in the Foodgrains Corporation ; there should not be transit loss and storage loss ; there should not be all these things which have been beautifully depicted by Parkinson and Appleby. This should not become a sort of white elephant to the Government and to the people, but should become an alert, vigorous, delicate machinery, sympathetic to every mood of the agriculturist, every mood of the consumer, and for that I think, debates from time to time in the Houses alone will not be enough. There ought to be consultation amongst members of all political parties, members of the various sectors of society, from time to time to see whether the plans formulated have borne fruit, whether there is necessity for bringing forward new schemes. That is why, when I was in the State Legislature along with my friend, I said that there ought to be a sort of permanent committee to look into agricultural and food problems, and the Minister replied at that time that the very idea of the formulation of such a committee, such an all-party committee, would create a scare in the minds of the people, that people would think that there was something

seriously wrong with the food position and that therefore such a Committee was constituted. I think that the psychology in Delhi is different from Madras and my Hon. friend would have convinced himself of the necessity for the formulation of such a consultative committee.

C. SUBRAMANIAM (*The Minister for Food and Agriculture*) :

But I think I consulted the Opposition leaders on most of the vital subjects ; I do not think he can throw the blame on me.

That shows that sometimes Members of the ruling Party are adept in the art of taking away some of the Opposition parties to their side. If there is nothing else, I would like to say that the consultative committees should be placed on a permanent footing so that we can meet very often and find out what is wrong and where it went wrong.

When this Foodgrains Trading Corporation scheme was adumbrated, I had an occasion to have a talk with a grain dealer in my parts. He said that the Government should take over the grain trade wholesale, but if they wanted to compete with them—the grain trader told me—they cannot beat us in the game. He said that the Governmental machinery, if it goes to purchase paddy cannot differentiate between one kind of paddy and another. They will rely upon the petty officers and they cannot understand the mood of the market, they do not know where to get it, how to get it. Therefore, if they are going to handle part of the trade and if another part is going to be left to us, then we can beat them in the game. I do not point this out in favour of the grain dealers. I am just placing the fact before the Food Minister, so that he can know the psychology of the grain traders. They think that the Government when it enters this field half-heartedly cannot compete with the grain traders. So I would ask the Food Minister to consider this aspect. Why should we leave another sector of it in the hands of the grain traders ? When just now an Hon. Member pointed out what the grain traders are saying, he has stated in answer, in a classical way, that an alternative may be thought of. Of course, for a Minister holding a responsible portfolio, he cannot be more plain than that. I would like to know what prevents him from taking over the entire foodgrains trade. Is it paucity of funds ? Is it paucity of machinery, or is it paucity of men ? If he had advanced any one of these arguments, any Hon. Member of this House would have pointed

out the solution for that difficulty. But to have a Foodgrains Corporation for 30 per cent, and leave the remaining 70 per cent in the hands of the grain dealers : I think that the grain dealers have every chance of defeating the Government on this plane. When I say that they have got every chance of defeating the Government, I would like to remind the House of what the Hon Shri T. T. Krishnamachari said, namely, "The landlords had beaten us in the game." Just as the landlords have beaten the Government in the game of land reforms, these grain dealers will beat the Government in this game, unless the entire grain trade is taken over and controlled by the Government. If there are difficulties they cannot be insurmountable. If cooperation is needed, every political party which has any sense of radicalism behind it would be prepared to strengthen the hands of the Minister and the Government.

The last item that I would like to place before the House is that when we fix up an incentive price and a remunerative price for the producer, we should not forget that the consumer is today being put to great hardship by the increase in prices of foodstuffs and other articles also. He cannot bear the burden. However much the present Government may condemn the agitation taken or proposed, they can never dispute this fact that when the call comes, thousands and lakhs of people gather to register their protest against the increase in prices. Therefore, the consumer's difficulty is very acute, very critical and very grave. Therefore, the consumer's point of view should be paid the greatest consideration. There were agitations against rising food prices. But by a curious combination of certain political forces, we find that the consumer is entirely forgotten and it is now a problem of giving remunerative prices and incentive prices to the producer. From the consumer, we have shifted to the producer. I would like the present Ministers to take into consideration the consumer's point of view, and if the price that is allotted for the producer is too high for the consumer, then the Government should not shirk the responsibility of subsidising the consumers by giving more D.A. to the white-collared workers and so on, and thus alleviate the difficulties of the consumers. I say this because the consumers, unless they are given certain incentives, are not going to produce the goods which they are engaged in producing. Therefore, a sort of sympathetic middle path between the producer and the consumer ought to be followed by the Minister, so that the price that is finally arrived at will not hit the consumer and will give certain incentives to the farmers.

When incentives to the farmers are discussed, I would like to say that the cost of production, in this case the cost of cultivation, should be considerably reduced by reducing the fertilizer prices, by reducing the prices of other items that are needed for cultivation. If we take this overall picture, we can arrive at a solution. I think that increased food production is not beyond our capacity. If only our State is given cheaper power, if our State is given Godavari water, if our State is given the atomic plant very soon, we cannot only produce for ourselves, but we can solve the food problem of India itself. Please do not think, Sir, that I am entering another field altogether. my favourite field. It is not for that purpose that I am saying this. I can point out that food production in Madras State per acre yield, whether it be rice, ground-nut or jowar or maize, is the highest that is obtained. And yet we do not have perennial water. We depend on deep wells and that is why electricity is needed for our State in larger and larger quantities and at cheaper and cheaper rates. And since we have exhausted all other avenues, we want the atomic plant and the diversion of the river water from the Godavari and other rivers. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Minister to take these also into consideration and to see to it that this particular State which is fast becoming the granary of the entire country is encouraged still further so that we can produce more and solve the food problem facing the entire country.

Thank you.

COLOSSAL TAXATION AND MEAGRE RETURNS

April 1966

Taking part in the discussions following the introduction of the Finance Bill in 1966 in the Rajya Sabha, Anna says that the amount of taxation raised in the country is so colossal and the returns to the people by way of social services, education and health etc., is so meagre. He condemns wasteful duplication of administrative units and inadequate investment on education, health, water supply and social services. In a fiery well-informed speech, Anna demolishes those wishful castles of imagination built in the air by the Ruling Party regarding the prosperity and progress of the country. He examines the volume, velocity and vindictiveness of taxation measures and criticises the Government's almost complete dependence on taxes. He characterises the performance of the Government as poor and charges the Government with the heinous crime of poor husbanding of the available resources of the country. He quotes widely divergent authorities ranging from experts from the United Nations and the World Bank to Soviet economists and a Congress Minister to prove his point of poor performance by the Government.

Anna accuses the Government of having miserably failed to generate revenues from the Government's vast investments in the public sector. It is refreshing to note that at the time these papers are edited (1975) there is greater awareness in the country on the need to earn adequate return from investments in the public sector.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Sir, whenever we from this side of the House rise to offer our criticism on any of the measures brought forward by the Government, we do so with a kind of hesitation, because the sincere criticisms offered are, for erroneous reasons, commandeered from the other side of the House as misrepresentations. For instance, from this side of the House, when we question the rationale behind foreign aid, Members of the ruling Party rise to ask whether

any country can do without such aid. They point out copious illustrations from the history of the various countries to show that most of the countries have relied upon foreign aid. But, Sir, when we question the rationale behind the growing dimension of aid, we do not mean to say that no country should take aid from any other country. We are concerned, as responsible members of the society, about the nature, the volume, the velocity of the aid taken and the use to which the aid is being put and our capacity for repayment. When we question it, we question the rationale behind foreign aid. Whenever we put forward that plea, Members from the ruling side rise to say that we are against aid as a whole. We are not against aid as a whole, because in a world which is becoming smaller and smaller, no country can live without interdependence with another country. Our purpose in questioning it is only to find out whether the amount is being put to the best use, whether we are developing our repayment capacity, whether the creditor countries have got implicit confidence in us whenever we demand more and more aid.

Whenever we raise a point, especially about taxation measures, the Members of the ruling Party rise to ask whether any Government can live without taxes. It is too elementary to be mentioned in this august House. Nobody thinks that a welfare State or even a police state can be run without taxes. But when we question the measure of taxation, we are concerned with the volume, the velocity and the vindictiveness of the taxation measure. We have been pointing out many a time that more and more indirect taxation is being indulged in. The common man is being taxed more and more, if sugar is taxed, if kerosene is taxed, if these things are taxed to such an extent that the regressive nature of indirect taxation has had its impact on the life of the masses of this country. That is why we question the rationale of indirect taxation.

I understand, Mr Chairman, that no civilised Government should depend on taxation alone, for its welfare measures. A Government, if it is to be called a welfare Government, a progressive and modern Government, should not crush the people with taxation, merely because it needs more and more money for expenditure. They should prune expenditure. There should be priorities, and they should augment their resources, not merely from new taxes, but from the revenues that have been promised by the public sector. We have allotted a colossal sum to the public sector and what is the performance of the public sector? Have

we realised the revenues expected of it? When you have failed woefully, miserably and continuously in regard to the public sector, robbing people, robbing Peter to pay Paul, when you have indulged in more and more taxation, we on this side of the House have got a right to question your new taxation proposals. That is why we are against your new proposals in the Budget. When I say that the Government should look to sources other than taxation, I am referring not to loans, because they have to be repaid. I refer to the public sector revenues, which we have not been able to get. I say that the taxation proposals of this Government are more and more regressive, leading to the grinding poverty of the people. They point out that all this money collected by way of taxation is being spent for the welfare of the people. As a matter of fact, they have stated in a very enthusiastic manner as follows :

“Since every Plan must evoke popular response if it is to be successful and since the ultimate objective of planned development is the improvement in the conditions of living of the people, the investment on commodity production has to be matched by allocation of adequate resources to those activities which constitute an investment in human resources.”

I would like to ask Members of the House through you, Mr Chairman, to enlighten me on whether they have carried out this policy in respect of human resources, whether they have allotted enough money for social purposes, so that the common man may feel, that whatever he is paying by way of taxation, he derives benefit from it. Here it is further stated :

“The Fourth Plan has, therefore, provided for a much larger proportion of the Plan outlay to education, health, water supply and such other social service sectors.”

Mr Chairman, when I read this very enthusiastic preamble, I read through the report to find out how they have translated this into action. It has been stated that they have allotted more and more money for education, health, water supply, etc. I find from their presentation, that as far as health and water supply are concerned, they have allotted and spent something like Rs. 88.53 crores in 1965-66 and they are now going to allot more and more money for purposes like health and water supply. This year they are providing Rs. 81.60 crores. Why should we have such enthusiastic preambles when we cannot translate them into action? For housing and construction they have Rs. 33.56 crores previously and this year they are allotted Rs. 25.08 crores. For the welfare

of backward classes they have allotted Rs. 29.34 crores last year and this year they have progressed so much that they are spending only Rs. 24.31 crores. For labour and labour welfare they have spent Rs. 18.19 crores and now they are going to spend Rs. 17.20 crores. For rehabilitation they have increased it slightly. Instead of Rs. 15 crores they are spending Rs. 18 crores. Mr Chairman, I would here say that the increase is inadequate if we take into consideration lakhs and lakhs of repatriates that are now coming to this country from Burma and Ceylon. As a matter of fact, if this Government is interested in rehabilitation, it will have to at least double the amount, because of lakhs of the people from Ceylon who can make this country bloom with flowers, with fruits, with tea and coffee. If they are to be rehabilitated, the amount that has now been raised, i.e. Rs. 3 crores, is quite inadequate. On rural works they have spent Rs. 10 crores last year and they have progressed so much that they are now giving Rs. 8 crores. On social services, they spent Rs. 407 crores last time and now they are spending Rs. 300 crores.

Now, I would with your permission, Mr Chairman, question the necessity for such an enthusiastic preamble. Maybe the preamble is written by one officer and the chart is prepared by another officer and the chart-preparing officer is not as enthusiastic as the preamble-preparing officer. This is the sort of problem and this is the sort of method that is adopted by the Government. The amount of taxation that has been raised is so colossal and the return to the people by way of social services, health, education, etc. is so meagre that I want to find out where all this money goes. Of course, they say that they have got such an advanced form of Government, that more and more money is to be spent on the administrative machinery. They have promised all sorts of administrative reforms, forgetting for the moment that there are so many schemes in the pigeonholes of the Government of India, wherein various administrative reforms have been adumbrated. Let us hope that the new Administrative Reforms Commission will be more effective than the previous one. But we should recognise the fact and Members of the ruling party should admit their failure to economise on administrative expenditure. There is not only multiplication of administrative units but there is actual duplication of administrative units.

Mr Chairman, we know that the Government of India has got an official organ for small-scale savings and they are spending

a lot of money on it. They are now saying that the returns are adequate. I am not going into that now. But when there is an official organisation for small-scale savings, I would like to be enlightened by the Government for the necessity for this. It says :

“ The Savings Mobilisation Board was set up as a Registered Society in 1964. The objects of the Board *inter alia*, are the promotion of savings and investments in all forms of the small savings schemes of Government, the Unit Trust of India and selected Public Sector undertakings. Grants to the Saving Mobilisation Board will amount to Rs. 55 lakhs this year and Rs. 65 lakhs next year based on the actual requirements of the Board.”

Now this is a sheer waste of money and duplication of institutions. When the all-powerful Government of India has got an official wing for this purpose, what is the necessity for a non-official body, though a registered one, getting Rs. 55 lakhs and Rs. 65 lakhs as grants from the Government ? This sort of wastage is taking place in every field. It is therefore, I say that they should look to sources other than taxation, especially the public sector revenue. They should so prune their administrative expenditure, that multiplication and duplication are put an end to.

Again, when we point out that the performance of this Government is very poor, the Members of the ruling Party here and elsewhere, assume an air of amazement and arrogate to themselves a professional tone and ask us to remember that even Russia had to wait for two decades and even three decades. We ask them for an explanation for their failure and not for an elementary lesson in Russian history. We know Russia and we know Russian history. To compare the time taken by Russia for effecting improvements with the time taken by India for economic development is something so ludicrous that it is unworthy of being mentioned in this august House. What was Russia after her revolution and how was India when the flag was unfurled at the Red Fort ? True it is that the British bled us white. But this country was not left in an uprooted state. Russia when it emerged from the revolution was full of scars. The whole farmland was devastated. Whole families were uprooted and society was in the throes of panic and disorder. And from that her leaders, the leaders of Russia, had to take the country along the path of progress and they have advanced and the time of plenty has become a possibility for them.

You put Russia after the revolution and India after her independence, on the same plane. I challenge the Members of the ruling Party to present the comparative pictures of these two situations, before any august House and await the verdict of that august assembly. In 1947, when Independence was granted to India, India was not in the same situation, in a similar situation or in an identical situation that Russia was in, after the Revolution. Another point is that the process and the methods of development in the eighteenth century were different from those of the nineteenth century and different from the twentieth. In between, technological and scientific achievements have gathered such momentum that if it took 20 years in the eighteenth century to attain a level of economic development, it ought to be possible in the twentieth century, to attain that level of development in five years. Russia did not have that time, all this technology and science. What is needed in the modern age is a correct appraisal and a correct application of modern technology and scientific achievements. But what Russia had to do at that time, was not the application of science and technology but the very unfolding of technology and science. To compare that Russia with the present-day India, is something ludicrous. If I give a fine typewriter to my young son and ask him to prepare a draft and if he takes two hours, well, naturally I get irritated and ask him, "Why are you sluggish?" And if my son were to retort "Grandfather took a whole day to prepare a draft," is he being impertinent, or is he being foolish? Because his grandfather did not have a fine typewriter, he had to prepare a parchment, he had to sharpen his quill. All this he had to do and so he took a whole day to prepare the draft. But here I have given my son a fine typewriter. The modern age has given India a fine typewriter and if you do not know the keyboard, who is to blame, if you take such a long time and if you make such sluggish motions? Of course you say you are moving. Yes, even a snail says it is moving. All, except mountains and trees, move, even insects move. But if in spite of the application of science, in spite of the application of modern technology and the large amounts of taxes collected and the colossal amounts of aid you have got, if the progress is not there, then we are bound to point that out. When we point it out, then they say we are biased and therefore we criticise the Government. But here, Mr Chairman, is the finding of not a competitive body but a competent body. They may say that we on this side are a competitive body and

they may not heed our criticism. But here is the finding of a competent body. A team of the United Nations Organisation has said that the rate of growth of the Indian economy was the lowest in Asia, and yet they assume an air of affront and say we question their achievements. At least they can give the research team of the U. N. the credit for having a rudimentary knowledge of economic systems. They say that the most unfortunate aspect of India's economic performances, for the last decade, is that it has been uniformly poor, in every major sector of economic activity, including agriculture and manufactures. Rich indeed, Mr Chairman, are the phrases that are given to us in tribute. We are uniformly poor in every major sector and with the sole exception of Indonesia, India finds herself at the lowest rung of the ladder of economic performance in Asia. But the members of the ruling Party, will rush up to the top of the ladder and shout at the top of their voices, "We have progressed". Evidently capital has been misinvested, and wastefully utilised. Together with the excessive Government expenditure this has resulted in inflation. This coupled with the other factors has begun to act as a drag on the economy, affecting growth adversely. What says the ruling Party to this finding? It does not come from a disgruntled politician. It does not come from the Opposition Party. They are obstinate. It comes from the research team of the U. N. It is a lame excuse when they say that the rate of growth is slow because we do not have technical assistance, that we do not have the proper know-how. But the World Bank team dispels even that illusion. The World Bank team says that India does not lack technical know-how, hard work or even the necessary finance, but suffers from poor husbanding of available resources. Whatever may be the defects of Indian society, Mr Chairman, we are considered to be very good husbands, but this Government is charged with this heinous crime of poor husbanding of available resources. The team goes on :

"Priorities are lopsided ; e.g., big irrigation projects are preferred to the much-needed fertilizer plants. Even the minimum land reforms have not been implemented. Legislation is passed but no real effort is taken for implementation."

For this, I know the members of the ruling Party have got another answer ; the Americans and American-tutored people are always prejudiced against us and therefore they pass such uncharitable remarks. I have got, Mr Chairman, finer colours

to offer. Here is a stricture from the Soviet side. A Soviet team has written :

“The policy of becoming self-sufficient in too many lines at the same time, has back-fired. The number of big projects undertaken to become independent of imports, is very large. If it had concentrated on a few schemes and completed them with maintenance requirements the results would have been far more rewarding. They would have maximised production ; there would have been adequate returns and the public sector would have gained prestige.”

Mr. Chairman, I have summoned, to defend me, economic experts, the United Nations Organisation and the World Bank and if the Government is not satisfied with all these strictures, I would present them some home-made toffee too. Here is the Congress Minister, Mr Sanjiva Reddy. He has said recently, that problems like food deficit and fertilizer scarcity were the result of defective planning and lack of a realistic approach by the Planning Commission ; there should be a radical change in the approach towards the country's problems by the Planning Commission. I think that the cup ought to have been full by this time and is it any wonder, and is it justifiable, that we should be brought to the guillotine if we present all this criticism in our own humble way ? What right has this Government to demand more and more taxes, when their performance is of such a low order ? I think that this Government, after having taxed the people so much, has not given proper returns or proper accounts to the nation. Therefore, though I realise that I do not have the power to stop it, I cannot abet a crime of allocating colossal sums to this inefficient, unrealistic, unresponsive and undemocratic Government that is being carried on. But whatever may be the criticism that is offered on this side, they have their numbers and their logic is based on numbers. Therefore, Mr Chairman, offering this criticism, we have to go to the other forum and receive justice from the only source, the first source, the primary source, the public, and, Mr Chairman, we are confident of getting a proper verdict.

Thank you.

5

Defence and Foreign Affairs

LET US MARCH AS ONE PEOPLE

November, 1962

1962 was a year of setback for India in the wake of the unprovoked Chinese aggression. The Chinese overwhelmed our forces and occupied our territories. In a sense, 1962 was also the finest hour for India, because the misfortune brought the Indian people together, made them forget their differences and take a united stand against the aggressor.

Speaking on the proclamation approving the resolution on Emergency by the Government, Anna says that "we might march as one people wedded to one principle having one aim, that is to chuck out the Chinese and safeguard the country." Anna also asks the Government to "enter the name of the DMK in the roll call of honour for the safety, for the dignity and future of this country."

A champion of Dravida Nadu and an avowed votary of separatism, when faced with the danger of foreign aggression rises to the level of the tallest of India's patriots and places at the disposal of the country the entire resources of his Party for meeting the challenge of the foreign aggressor. In a sense, Anna was rewriting the history of India. It has been the tragedy of India's past that whenever the country was faced with foreign aggression, from the time the Aryan hordes thundered into India, the Indian princes fought among themselves and some of them joined the foreigner against the interests of their own country. The Chinese aggression was also responsible for Anna's modifying his pet concept of an independent Dravida Nadu. As Anna himself stated in an interview with the Editor of "The Illustrated Weekly of India" in September 1965, "we have since withdrawn the demand for Dravida Nadu. We first realised its dangerous potentialities at the time of the Chinese aggression.....Indeed secession would have been suicidal in the context of the Chinese aggression. We issued a statement to the Press announcing the suspension of our agitation in favour of Dravida Nadu," (Illustrated Weekly of India, 26th September 1965).

MR. CHAIRMAN, Sir, I rise today to support the motion brought forward by the Home Minister, not only on my behalf, but also on behalf of the Party to which I have the honour to belong, the DMK. Very rarely indeed do legislative bodies with one mind confer extraordinary powers on the Government. The very fact that all the parties are united in arming the Government with emergency powers is positive proof that here has arisen a state, when group and political differences ought to be submerged in the one cardinal principle of safeguarding the dignity, independence and freedom of the country.

Sir, I was reading the news about Chinese incursions while I was confined in a cell at the Central Jail, Vellore. Naturally, I was infuriated at the ruling Party. But when I read the news about the incursions of the Chinese, the most depressing period of my jail life were those three or four days when I was reading that wave after wave of Chinese aggressors were crossing the frontiers, and our warriors in spite of fighting valiantly, were forced to give up certain places and certain posts. This is a time not for elaborate explanations of the situation. This is a time indeed, not for discussing a motion. We meet here today, to solemnly pledge ourselves to the one great task of driving out the aggressor from our frontiers.

As soon I was released on the 2nd of last month, I issued a statement that the Party to which I have the honour to belong, the DMK Party, would put a moratorium on all its activities, agitational or otherwise, and direct its entire energy and place its entire apparatus at the disposal of the Government of India to thwart the ambitions of the aggressor.

That there is an aggressor, one need not doubt. Whatever may be the aim of the aggressor, our aim is clear. We want to safeguard the dignity of the country and the dignity of democracy. It is not usual at this stage to probe into the ideological causes of this great conflict. I do not consider this a mere incursion. I think knowingly or unknowingly, we are now engaged in an ideological conflict. The world is divided today into two camps, the democratic and the undemocratic. There is also the principle of co-existence. If democracy is to co-exist with other systems of Government, democracy should show that in times of crisis and tension, it is as strong as, if not stronger than, the other systems of government. Therefore democratic bodies, forgetting political differences and political prejudices, have come forward to pronounce

with one voice, that aggression shall be defeated, that the Chinese shall be pushed back to their frontiers.

Sir, the news came as a shock to men of my type. When I say men of my type, I refer to people who did not have previous occasion of listening to, or addressing august assemblies of this sort. I represent the man in the street. We always thought that no country would dare to commit aggression on this country because we were so confident that our principle of non-alignment, our principle of neutrality, had been appreciated by the intelligent countries of the world. We were also very confident because of the great friendship that was forged between China and India, by the Prime Minister of India. The one man who championed the cause of China when China was friendless at the UNO at every international forum, and even in this House and the other House, was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who stood as the champion of Chinese independence. It was he who was pleading for the entry of China into the U.N. Organisation. That is why we had a legitimate confidence that there would be no clash at all between China and India. We thought that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would have instilled the full Bandung spirit in the Chinese mind. But knowing Chinese history, we know that China and the Chinese stand more for puzzles than for explanations.

I realize that there are other parties which are not as shocked as myself, because they have been issuing notes of warning from time to time from this and the other House, that our policy of appeasement, that our policy of non-alignment, that our policy of neutrality, that this policy of decrying military blocs and pacts is going to land us not in the land of happiness, but in the land of danger. Therefore, some of the Members of the other political parties who were issuing warnings, rose in this House and in the other House, to say that what they had feared all along had come to pass but even in that, there was a note of restraint and responsibility. That can only be found in the noblest of democratic assemblies. In this House, during these 3 or 4 days, all the discussions that took place and the sentiments expressed were so responsible, and there was so much restraint, that the Prime Minister has come forward with a courageous statement to say that at a suitable time, an enquiry would be conducted into the nature of the unpreparedness and the persons responsible for it. It was only the most courageous of men that could have come forward to order an enquiry into it. Whatever may be the differences

that we as opposite political parties may have, — and we do have differences with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the head of the administration — as the Leader of the Congress Party, nobody doubts his claim of the great role to being the redeemer and resurrector of this nation and as the repository of the ennobling ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Therefore, when some of us offer our suggestions, it is with that noble spirit that the democratic leader comes forward halfway to meet us, and considers the suggestions given by us.

We have to find out one thing, because it is very necessary to strengthen our war effort. We have to find out the exact attitude behind the Chinese invasion. Why should China fight over the frontier when this country has been prepared to sit round a table and discuss the frontier question? Why should the Chinese come wave after wave and occupy border areas like Tawang, dig trenches there, make Tawang into a military camp and await the proper moment to leap forward? What was it that was done by this country to infuriate China, and why should the Chinese people think that their frontier lies very near Uttar Pradesh? If we probe into the attitude of the Chinese, I think we will have to consider the other problem which I mentioned earlier, that this is an ideological conflict. The Chinese think that our policy of non-alignment, that our policy of neutrality, means weakness. They think that we are left without friends. They think that because we are wedded to the principle of Panchsheel we cannot fight. We have always been saying that we will not fight. That does not mean that we cannot fight. Our warriors at the valley of the immortal have laid down their lives. We have more men with increased striking power, and we will have to prove to the Chinese that when we say that we will not fight it does not mean that we cannot fight. More and more arms ought to be supplied to the warriors there and the whole country should stand alongside those warriors at the front. During war time, the home front is as important as the actual battlefield.

In the minds of men today we find a remarkable unity of purpose and a determination which only doughty warriors can command. The resources of the people and the response of the people is pouring forth spontaneously in an increasing measure. But we will have to ponder whether this is enough. Our Prime Minister has stated that it is not going to be a war for months or years, but it is going to be a prolonged affair. If it is going to be a

prolonged affair, do we not have the right to demand that we should formulate our policy to meet not only a prolonged struggle, but also the situation where China thinks it can declare war on India ? Even today, they are saying that there is no war between India and China. Their agents of propaganda are saying that the real friendship between the Indian people and the Chinese people has not been disturbed, that they have occupied only their own territory and not Indian territory. Sir, the peace offensive of China is as terrible as its war offensive. Therefore we should be clear in our minds as to how, where and to what extent we should commandeer the resources of this country. True it is that men and women from the lowest strata and the highest strata, have come forward with their help and contributions. But while the poor men have come forward and given princely sums, the Princes have been very poor in their contributions. I would say that the amount spent on the privy purses of the Princes, ought to be cut down for one year, at least for one year, so that the man in the street may know that this is a time when everyone is prepared to sacrifice in a graded manner.

A Prince is not only a titular head. He should be a Prince in character. When the whole country is faced with such a danger, it will not be beyond his capacity or ability to give up his privy purse.

Another thing that I would suggest is, that if it is going to be a prolonged war, we have to consider what ought to be the method by which we should arm our men. How are we going to arm our men at the front, if the front is to be extended, as I am afraid it will be extended ? With what sort of weapons are we going to supply them ? I was very happy to hear the Prime Minister tell us the other day that production is going apace, that factories are working round the clock, that more and more automatic weapons are being produced. But we should remember that while we go on producing them, China will not be keeping quiet. Perhaps, they are producing more weapons today. Because they live behind the iron curtain, we do not know their real strength. We do not know their potential strength and we do not even know who their potential friends are. Therefore I would suggest that we should draw out the goodwill of the forty odd countries who have expressed their willingness to help us. In drawing upon their goodwill, the principle of non-alignment should not stand in our way. This country exists not for non-alignment, but non-alignment exists for

this country. Therefore, if we find that non-alignment stands in the way of the security of this country, I would far rather forego the principle of non-alignment, than forego the independence of the country.

Sir, I may also point out that though theoretically the principle of non-alignment is unassailable, the practical implementation of this principle has left grave doubts in the minds of the powerful countries of the world. Non-alignment, certain countries think — and they have got a right to think so — is only a cloak, a convenient cloak. I do not remember the name of the person who said it, but a statement was made that our principle of non-alignment is only a method or policy adopted for getting aid from both the blocs. That is the result of the practical implementation of the principle of non-alignment. Perhaps our representatives at the UNO have woefully failed to impress on the minds of the powers, the basic implications of this principle of non-alignment. I do not name anybody. But I would remind this House that a cloud of suspicion has been created by some of the words and some of the deeds that we have indulged in, in the last ten or twelve years. Therefore, I would ask the Government to choose such men for the UN Organisation as can place before the world a clear enunciation of the implication of the principle of non-alignment. Though the principle of non-alignment as such, is theoretically correct, in the practical application of that principle, there ought to be some liberalisation. What should be the guiding principle in the application of this non-alignment? I find from the dictionary that alignment is good and men conversant with motor cars would know that without alignment a car never moves. Therefore, non-alignment is a negative thing and it should not bar our progress. If by non-alignment we mean that we are not going to allow ourselves to be placed in, or dragged into any military bloc, I can understand and appreciate it. I do not want India to be dragged into any military pact. But if it means that we will not move and move in the right direction, then it means that we have not understood clearly or that we have not been told clearly, the implications of this principle of non-alignment. Therefore, I would say that all the democratic forces should align themselves, in counteracting the baneful effect of the undemocratic forces.

I suggest that while drawing on the goodwill of the forty odd countries that have declared their intention towards our country, we should send a representative delegation to the United States of

America, to the United Kingdom, to Canada, and to such other countries as are friendly towards us, so that we can build up an arms aid consortium with those countries. We cannot pay for all the arms that we need. Nor can we go on producing more and more arms as more and more Chinese invade our country. Therefore, I suggest that this "arms aid consortium" should be established and a good-will mission for this purpose should be sent forthwith to the USA, the UK, and Canada. A representative delegation preferably, with members not only from the ruling Party but also from the opposition parties. I say this because we should show to the world outside, that it is not only the ruling Party but also the other parties which are interested in maintaining the Government's policy. I would say that we may even call for volunteers from other countries that are favourably disposed towards us. There is nothing wrong in that. There is nothing derogatory in that. I do not mean to say that our battles are to be fought by other soldiers. But I would like the world to know that there are people who are prepared to lay down their lives for the cause of democracy. Therefore I would suggest that this goodwill delegation that I propose, should tour these countries, collect funds, collect arms, and also collect volunteers, so that China may know that our principle of neutrality is not something negative but something positive ; that our attitude has created such an amount of goodwill in the minds of democratic countries that we are able to draw from the bank of goodwill, from this international bank of goodwill, at our will and pleasure. These are some of the suggestions that I want the ruling party to consider.

Madam, I am very glad that we have had an assurance from the Government side, that the price level will be kept, because the home front depends entirely on controlling the price level. War creates a scare only when people find the necessities of life denied to them, or when the prices of the necessities of life are soaring high. Therefore, if the Government comes forward with the assurance that the price level will be kept within the reach of the masses, then the home front will be very strong. As far as the food front is concerned, the Food Minister has assured us that we need have no misgivings about the stock. But the stock is not as important as future production and, therefore, future food production should be at a very high level and the very pertinent and very timely suggestion given by the Hon. Sri V. T. Krishnamachari about the food front, may be looked into. I would also

suggest that when we want the peacetime economy to be geared to the war-time economy, measures ought to be formulated. It is not very easy, because a peace-time economy is based on plenty and a war-time economy is based on scarcity. Therefore a Directorate of Economic Affairs should be set up to correlate peace-time economic machinery to war-time purposes. For all these things, I would suggest that the ruling Party should take other political parties into its confidence. I am not thinking in terms of Defence Committees and the like, but I am asking for an intimate contact between the different political parties and the ruling party. Any suggestion ought to be welcomed ; any contribution ought to be welcomed by the ruling Party so that we can move, not as this or that political party, but as a solid phalanx to meet the Chinese attack.

Madam, I do not think I should travel over controversial ground, but one Hon. Member did take us into that controversial subject. He was saying that our attitude towards the Tibetan crisis was not wrong. I beg to differ. We have a very vital interests in Tibet, Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal because they form the natural buffer states of India. You will find ample evidence in history, whether it is during the Huan Dynasty or during the revolutionary period of Sun Yat Sen, that China has become the Yellow peril and a world-wide danger. Ofcourse, now there has been a mixture of yellow and red and I do not know what colour it comes to, but the Yellow peril is well-known and whenever China becomes strong, it casts its covetous eyes on the frontiers of other countries. I read the speech of a very great dignitary of China after the Tibetan incident. Instead of saying that Tibet belongs to China, he indulged in a curious logic. He said that Tibet belongs to China and Bhutan, Sikkim and Ladakh belong to Tibet and therefore, the Ladakhis, Bhutanese and Sikkimese are Tibetans and that they must come to the great motherland of China. Madam, if this theory is translated into action it may not be merely a prolonged conflict ; it may even lead to a prolonged war and you should be prepared for all eventualities. Therefore, I suggest, that we should forthwith formulate schemes for taking into our fold the democratic countries, I hope they will come.

Madam, I read the other day, the appeal issued by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Mr Gopala Reddi, asking newspapers to come forward to donate space. I offer to donate as much space as the Minister desires in all the dailies and weeklies

which our Party has got, but while donating this space I would request the Information and Broadcasting Minister to gear up the radio to war-time purposes rather than to peace-time purposes. I was very pained to hear time and again our radio telling us, "Chusul is still in our hands," as if it is a regrettable thing that it is in our hands. Our radio should become the charge-house for emanating propaganda of the right sort to counteract the propaganda of the other side. Why don't we think of asking members of different political parties to talk over the radio? Why don't we get our jawans, some of them, to talk of the difficult terrain and the dangers that they have to face? Why don't we ask our people who have donated to come and announce their donations over the radio, stating that they have donated so much and asking others for donations? Madam, propaganda is such a delicate weapon. Today we find that non-democratic countries know more about the full the implications of propaganda than the democratic countries. Therefore, while I am prepared to offer space in the papers which our Party has got,—we have got two or three dailies and ten or fifteen Weeklies—I am saying that the propaganda system ought to be geared up and the other parties should also be given a proper place, so that we might march as one people wedded to one principle, having one aim and that is to chuck out the Chinese and safeguard the country.

Madam, I do not want to take more time of this House. I would have liked this Session to end with this plea so that we might meet again, come forward and discuss other items. If we go on discussing other items and other Bills, I think we are disturbing the solemnity of the occasion and, therefore in supporting the Resolution brought forward by the Home Minister, I enter the name of the DMK in the roll call of honour that is being now formulated for the safety, for the dignity and future of this country, this nation.

Thank you.

A STATELESS PEOPLE

December 1964

According to the Indo-Ceylon Pact signed in 1964 between India and Ceylon, India agreed to provide homes for 3 lakhs of people from Ceylon who were said to be of Indian Origin. Anna delves into history to show that these people were undoubtedly the rightful citizens of Ceylon. Realising the economic chaos this influx into the South would cause, he charges the Government of allowing themselves to be persuaded to take on Ceylon's problems as their own.

He questions the negation of human dignity which involved uprooting 3 lakhs of people irrespective of their wishes, people to whom Ceylon was homeland for generations. In this pragmatic but emotional speech, he conveys the remorse and agony of millions at the betrayal of a Stateless people.

MR VICE-CHAIRMAN, the Minister of External Affairs has given us a fairly full picture of the present international situation. I have the fullest sympathy towards the Minister of External Affairs when he is called upon to solve problems bristling with difficulties and confounding the best brains of the present-day world. Though the field is very alluring, I do not propose, due to the embarrassing time factor, to enter into the very alluring grounds covered by the Minister of External Affairs. I propose to be nearer home and deal with only one problem, the so-called Indo-Ceylon Pact. In dealing with that problem I may request the Minister of External Affairs to take my speech to convey the feeling of remorse and agony by millions of people over this Indo-Ceylon Pact. The Minister has been telling us how politicians and statesmen all over the world, are trying to enthrone justice and equity, are trying to find out how best human dignity can be safeguarded. I am going to measure the Indo-Ceylon Pact only by that rod of human dignity, international justice and commonsense. Measuring it with such a

rod, I find that this Pact means a gross betrayal of millions of people whose one sin has been looking towards this country and this Government for solace.

The Indo-Ceylon Pact, the very name I would say Mr Vice-Chairman, the very name, is a misnomer. There is no problem at all between two sovereign countries like India and Ceylon. The main problem is between millions of people settled for generations together in Ceylon and the Ceylonese Government in the matter of the treatment meted out to them. The only part that we could have played and the legitimate part that we should have played, is by stressing the human aspect of the problem. All along, it has been stated that we are not going to look at this problem as other than a problem of human interest. The persistent, the consistent and the logical policy being followed by the previous Government, to be more correct, by the late lamented Prime Minister of this country has been given a go-by, without an iota of remorse. He has been stressing that the problem of millions of people who have been unfortunately termed as stateless is a problem that has to be tackled mainly and solely by the Ceylonese Government. The Indian Government enters the picture only to guide the Ceylonese Government when it needs guidance. A point has been raised in this House, whether the sovereignty of one country can be abridged by the actions and consultations of another country. Various views on sovereignty there have been, and the present trend is that even sovereignty is to come under the aegis and under the guidance of the eternal principles of justice and fairplay. If this is merely the sovereign right of the Ceylon Government, Mr Kotelawala, Mr Dudley Senanayake, after that Mr Bandaranaike, and now Sirimavo Bandaranaike need not have, and would not have, and could not have, come to this country for consultations. The very fact that successive Prime Ministers of Ceylon have come to this country for consultations on this problem means that this is not purely a problem wherein the sovereignty of a country is at issue. This is a problem wherein the whole world has an interest. The fact of the matter is that millions of people who are called people of Indian origin are settled in Ceylon, not for a decade or two decades, but for centuries together. It has been stated that only the Indians there are people of Indian origin. May I ask the Minister of External Affairs to delve deep into the annals of Ceylon ? It may give him an insight into the fact that the so-called Sinhalese are people of Indian origin who went to Ceylon during

the reign of King Vijaya, and the millions of people who are now dubbed as people of Indian origin, have gone there later. Therefore, to call the people of Indian origin 'aliens' to Ceylon, is a travesty of fact. This Government ought not to have countenanced such barefaced injustice. The main burden ought to have been on the Ceylon Government to come to this country or before the bar of the world and they ought to have stated in what way they are treating, they have been treating and they are going to treat people who are settled there permanently.

Most of the people today who are called men of Indian origin have no connection, no hovels, no homes, no relations in that unfortunate part of our country, Tamil Nad. The only affinity between those people and the people of Tamil Nad is the affinity of language. If the Ceylon Government turns round and says that this is your problem, what prompted the Government of India to accept that version of the Ceylon Government's proposal? What is it that they have surrendered to? Is it to temptation? Is it to pressure? Is it to various other extraneous circumstances? Why have they surrendered to the temptation of taking this problem as their problem? Even after having taken that false stand, did the Government of India or the present Ministry, follow the best tenets of democratic principles? What did those Prime Ministers of Ceylon do? When Mr Dudley Senanayake came here, when Mr Kotelawala came here and when Mrs Bandaranaike came here, they took into their confidence, they consulted, the important leaders of Opposition in their own country. I remember when Mr Dudley Senanayake, as Prime Minister, came to this country, he brought along with him as one of the Members of the Delegation, the late lamented Mr Bandaranaike. Why is it that when a small country like Ceylon maintains and works along the best democratic tenets, you have not taken care to consult the opinion of any of the Opposition Parties? Why is it that the Ceylon Government when it came here, came fully armed with the unanimity of opinion of all political parties functioning in Ceylon and even of the Communist Party which is called the Lanka Sama Samaj Party. Why are you presenting to this House and to this country, a *fait accompli*. Why has the Minister stated in the other House, that he was constantly in consultation with the leaders of opinion in Tamil Nad? May I ask the Minister of External Affairs to inform this House if he has taken care to consult any one of the leaders of the major political parties in Tamil Nad?

No. He can turn round and say that the Chief Minister of Madras has given his blessings or consent and another Minister who was deputed by the Chief Minister here — Hon. Mr Ramaiah — had given the consent. What else can they do ? Can they expose the Government of India ? They cannot. Their loyalty to the Party and to the Government stands in the way of their opening their hearts to say what they feel. Even after accepting the Indo-Ceylon Pact, speaking if I remember correctly at Baroda, the Chief Minister of Madras stated, that he would have been happier if a smaller number of people had been asked to come. What does that mean ? It means there is a volcanic eruption though in a mild form, in the mind of the Chief Minister of Madras. He is not happy over this Pact though he cannot, as a loyal Congressman, as a loyal State Chief Minister, question the propriety of the Central Government. Therefore to cite the support given by the Chief Minister of Madras, or his Deputy, is merely burking the issue. Why have you deviated from the path followed by the late lamented Prime Minister ? What did he say on the floor of this House, on the floor of the other House, and on many occasions ? He had very correctly stated that he would take any number of people coming to this country, if they come voluntarily. What is this Pact ? This is not a voluntary repatriation. You have assured the Sinhalese that you would take 5 lakhs or more that will be coming and you have perused after much difficulty — I can understand the difficulties — Ceylon to retain 3 lakhs of people. You have left without taking into consideration, for the present only I hope, 1,50,000 people. Well, when a similar problem confronted Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr Kotelawala, what were the terms ? What were the terms of the Indo-Ceylon Pact of 1953-54 ? The main terms, the soul of the Pact, was that the repatriation of the people ought to be voluntary. The people in Ceylon should be given the option, to opt for India or remain in Ceylon, and the Ceylonese Government at that time went a step further and said that it was working upon a scheme of inducement, that they were going to induce the Indian residents there, as they called them, to go over to India by offering them the temptation of a cash bonus. Even that has been given up or given a go-by in this Pact. After the 1954 Pact, did the Minister for External Affairs or even the Prime Minister, look into the aspect of how that Pact has worked ? It has been stated and it has not been repudiated by the Ceylonese Government, that when more than 8 lakhs of people applied for registration of

citizenship in Ceylon, merely 1,25,000 people were registered. It has been said by Senators and Members of the House of Representative in Ceylon itself, that the 1953-54 Pact, was not implemented in a just manner. Even the present Cabinet Minister there, who has now resigned, Mr Felix Bandaranaike, stated on the floor of the House of Parliament in Ceylon, that the Pact has not been worked out equitably and justly. When a Government, after having entered into a Pact with this Government, has not worked that Pact correctly and justly, why have you walked into that parlour and signed on the dotted line ? That is why millions of people today think that the so-called Indo-Ceylon Pact, is a betrayal of the interests of millions of people. Hon. Members here have stated and particularly Mr Chengalvaroyan has said, "What alternative is there ?" Well what alternative is there when you sit tight over the fate of our country and these people. When you do not mete out justice, what alternative is there ? That alternative will be found out by the people at large. If you are going to solve every problem with this condition ' what alternative ', we can solve the Chinese problem very easily. Already I find a trend from the speech of the Hon Mr. Sapru and another Hon. Member, that they are thinking along the line of "What alternative ?" "What alternative" should not or ought not to be the argument of a potent Government. What alternative has the Ceylon Government if we refuse to sign this Pact ? If we refuse to take those 5 lakhs into this country, what is the alternative open to the Ceylon Government ? Have they got the guts to keep these millions of people in a Belsen camp ? Have they the power to defy world opinion by shooting them down ? No. Even the Ceylon Government cannot go so far. When many Hon. Members addressed the Minister of External Affairs as the Foreign Minister, I at first was irritated and then I thought he is really a Foreign Minister and that is why he has left it to the discretion of a foreign Government to settle the fate of millions of people. Mr G. G. Ponnambalam, who held the Ministry of Industry in the Ceylonese Government said when resigning his post on the floor of the House of the Representative :

"The Indian and Ceylonese Citizenship Act has been so enforced and implemented, as to render it utterly oppressive, with the deliberate object of denying to several hundreds of thousands of Tamils who call no country other than Ceylon their own and owe no allegiance to any other country, their inalienable right to be part of the permanent population of this country."

Ceylon has not implemented the citizenship Act of 1953-54. When the Ceylon Government has not implemented the Indo-Ceylon Pact of 1953-54, how can we believe that this Pact is going to solve the problem ? And when a member of my Party in the Lok Sabha put a very pertinent question to the Ministry for External Affairs, he wanted a definite, categorical answer from the External Affairs Minister. My friend there, Mr Sezhiyan, wanted a clarification from the Minister, as to whether this repatriation will be voluntary or compulsory. The Minister for External Affairs—I have come to realise that he is adept in the art of by-passing straight questions—said, “Why should we take a hypothetical stand ?” Two labour organisations in Ceylon, one led by Mr Aziz, and another by Mr Thondaman, both have declared their repudiation of this Pact. They have said that they are not going to opt for India. Therefore this is not a hypothetical proposition. When the people in Ceylon refuse to opt for India, what are you going to do ? Are you going to take them in shifts and get the five lakhs of people here, whether they are willing or not and dump them on India ?

Another Member said that we have no jurisdiction. I find from reports that a professor of Delhi University — I do not remember his name at the moment — has stated, in one of the seminars conducted by the Delhi University, that the Ceylon Government has got an obligation, according to the United Nations Charter on Human Rights, to confer citizenship on those lakhs of people there. Instead of taking into consideration all those aspects, the External Affairs Minister, good man that he is, has signed this Pact ; or is it the Prime Minister ? I do not know—which is a betrayal of the human dignity of lakhs of Stateless people there. It is only to register my protest against this attitude, that I have taken part in today's discussions.

Thank you.

REAPPRAISAL OF FOREIGN POLICY

November 1965

The Foreign Policy debate in the Rajya Sabha in November 1965 followed the resounding victories of the armed forces of India over Pakistan. Anna is proud of our armed forces and gives expression to his feeling that if only the Ruling Party had shown some part of the mettle of the armed forces, most of the ills of the country would have been solved. Anna analyses the concept of non-alignment and says that only a strong and independent country backed by a democratic machinery and democratic spirit can have an independent foreign policy. Anna pleads for the need to strengthen the democratic forces in the country and build up economic self-sufficiency so that an independent Foreign Policy would be possible not only in name but also in reality.

MR CHAIRMAN, Sir, we are discussing the subject of foreign affairs, this time under peculiar and exciting circumstances. We have had very recently the glorious experience of thwarting the attempted aggression and now we are meeting full of pleasure and pride, legitimate pride, about our fighting forces. But we should not be misled into the belief that the victories on the battle front are the direct outcome of our foreign policy and its implementation. The foreign policy of our country is far more permanent, far more flexible than the tactics and the strategy that we, from time to time, take on the battle front. We are all thankful and proud to possess a fighting force which has shown its mettle and when I go through the catalogue of victories that our fighting forces have won, I for one am constrained to think that if only the ruling Party had given such a catalogue of triumphs all these 18 years, then most of the ills of this country even on the foreign front, would have been absent. We had given our fighting forces, we are told, not sophisticated instruments and weapons. We gave our fighting forces,

weapons that have been considered obsolete. Yet against odds and against sophisticated American Patton tanks, our fighting forces on all fronts have established victory and triumphed. We have given to the ruling Party all these 18 years not obsolete machines, but whatever and all that they wanted. Yet whether it is on the foreign front, whether it is on the home front, whether it is on the food front or on the industrial front, they have not presented such a catalogue as our fighting forces have presented to us. Therefore the victories that have been registered on the battle front should be taken into consideration when we are considering the foreign policy of this country. As a matter of fact, the foreign policy of this country, or for that matter, of any country, is not strictly one-way traffic. We cannot go on formulating certain foreign policies without taking into consideration the foreign policies and the situations that are being created in the world around us. That is why, when some of us begin to talk about a re-thinking on the policy of non-alignment and other policies, the members of the ruling Party should not rush and dash against us, saying that we are trying to sell goods and ideas of some other country. As a matter of fact, the DMK is not interested in any camps whatsoever. This non-alignment recalls to my mind a story of my student days. An applicant for a job wrote in his application form that he was a non-matriculate. The entry "non-matriculate" of course proved beyond doubt that he was not a matriculate. But the person who was to give the job asked the applicant this question, "Well, you are not a matriculate. Then what are you? Have you passed the First Form, the Second Form, or Third Form?" I am interested not in the particular question as to whether you are non-aligned or not, but I have a legitimate right to ask the Government when they say that they are non-aligned, what exactly they are. This non-alignment or non-involvement is a negative thing. There is no use rushing forward to say that it is purposeful and specific and positive. The very connotation of the word "non" means that we are not aligned with anybody. By that I do not mean that we should get ourselves aligned to SEATO or CENTO or NATO. As a matter of fact, I do not want any such military junta to exist at all. They are, as a matter of fact, trying to almost stab the United Nations Organisation itself in the back, by having these circles within circles.

When I say that I want the Government to tell us what exactly they mean by non-alignment, I am not asking the Government to

join some military junta. They should have before them, an objective. That objective is peace with honour and concord, leading to comradeship. When we want peace, we are equally determined not to enter into any military alliances or pacts or military junta. The next best thing, the only alternative, is to make ourselves stronger and stronger, to get everything that we want from the home soil, to stand on our own legs, not looking to this side or that side or going to this country or that country too often. Somebody said—I fail to re-collect his name—that a nation with a begging bowl in its hand cannot have an independent foreign policy. It is very easy and very enthusiastic to say that we will never accept any aid with strings attached. But even accepting aid without strings speaks ill of this country. We have got vast potentialities. We have got vast possibilities and the present conflict has shown us that if the call comes from the proper quarters, and at the proper moment, and with the proper tone, then the masses are ready to stand up and produce what they are expected to produce. Therefore, our foreign policy, if it is to be really independent, can be based only upon a strong home front. What do I mean by a strong home front? Not the home-guards nor the defence councils and other so-called clubs or meetings, but the strengthening of the democratic forces, the democratic machinery, and above all, the democratic spirit. It is for the ruling Party, for the Members of the Treasury Benches even now to think whether they are strengthening the democratic machinery during this period of emergency. Can the Members of the Treasury Benches say with enthusiasm that they are taking along with them all the opposition parties, in every one of their efforts?

Nearer home, the Prime Minister of our country who has hit the head-lines and rightly entered into everybody's heart, is making triumphal tours. He is entitled to them. Or rather I would say, that the people are entitled to ask their Prime Minister to come and receive their ovation and honours. But has he thought at any time, how fine, how ennobling, it would be, if instead of these triumphal tours being merely government functions or Party functions, they had been arranged on an all-party basis? Then the strength of that democratic spirit, that energy that we have seen surging in the country, would have been unparalleled. Well, 'I am talking, people may say, of small things. But then the tiny small spring that it is that makes the clock tick. Even though the matter may appear very small when compared to the controversy

over the atom bomb or the Afro-Asian Conference, nevertheless we have to take it into consideration. I would like the democratic spirit on the home front to be built up constantly, taking into consideration the vast energy that has come gushing forth from the masses now.

As far as the present situation is concerned, whether we look to this country or that country for help, let us not forget that even after eighteen years, we are not in a position to stand on our own legs. We have every wish to stand on our own legs. We are very strong in our sentiments, stronger still in our statements but fact belies even our statements. Even today we have to depend upon America for aid not for sophisticated items of machinery, but for a morsel of food. For eighteen long years the ruling Party has been sitting tight over the destinies of this country. What did the people derive from that ? They asked for taxes, more and more and it has been given. They asked for loans, they asked for grants and everything was given. They asked for votes, and in three consecutive General Elections the people were generous enough to vote them to power. But even after eighteen years, the Food Minister and the Prime Minister met in a Party conclave and decided that unless we receive PL 480 foodgrains from America, there is the grim prospect of famine gripping the country. When I compare the failure of the Government on the food front with the victory registered by our fighting forces on all sectors, oh ! what a comparison it makes. We think that if only the ruling Party had given the priorities as they ought to have been given, this food problem itself would not be facing us today. Well for that I do not mean, as my friend Mr Govindan Nair would say, " No PL 480 at all ", because famine and starvation death are something more gruesome than even PL 480. That is why our Prime Minister has been asked by well-wishers and friends, especially by the Food Minister and the Railway Minister, to take a quick trip to America. The Prime Minister seemed to be saying so far that he is prepared to talk to anybody on anything except Kashmir. In today's paper, I find that the Prime Minister has stated in the other House, that he is prepared to talk even about Kashmir with the President of the United States if Mr Johnson wants that talk to take place. It is in that context that we should find out what is at the back of the American Government ? What possibly can be the policy of the American Government with regard to the Indo-Pakistan conflict ? There is no denying the fact that Pakistan

is aligned with America. When the United States of America issued an invitation for various nations to join the SEATO, the NATO and the CENTO, India refused, and refused correctly, to join any one of the Pacts. Pakistan, though it withstood the temptation for some time, took upon itself the option of joining the SEATO and other military Pacts adumbrated by the United States of America. We cannot then except America not to be partial to Pakistan. Therefore, we should find out how best to convert the American mind in spite of its alliance with Pakistan.

It is, to a great extent, due to the Foreign Minister of our country, Mr Swaran Singh, that the American Press and the American public and American leaders have now given up talking about plebiscite, but still they think and talk about some sort of a political solution for the Kashmir problem. Therefore, when the Prime Minister of this country meets the President of the United States of America, and when the President of the United States of America takes up the Kashmir question, the Prime Minister of this country should remember the blood spilt on the various fronts, the victories registered on the various fronts, the various assurances given in this and in the other House and outside by the Prime Minister and his Government, that they are not going to part with Kashmir. Another thing. Somehow though it has now become necessary or expedient to take aid from America, I think, reading through the history of American diplomacy and American international commitments somehow the American Government and American leaders have a peculiar knack of choosing the wrong people. They are adepts in the art of bidding on the wrong horses on high stakes and one of the horses has been given a salubrious stable in what is called Taiwan. Another is Syngman Rhee and there are other puppet leaders created every week in South Vietnam. Therefore, somehow in the people's mind and in my mind, in spite of the fact that I have got my differences with the Communists, Right and Left, American money seems to be tainted. The less of it the more we gain; the more of it the more we lose. Therefore, we should come back to the home front, strengthen our democratic forces and democratic spirit and stand on our own legs.

Thank you.